

A

CHILD'S HISTORY

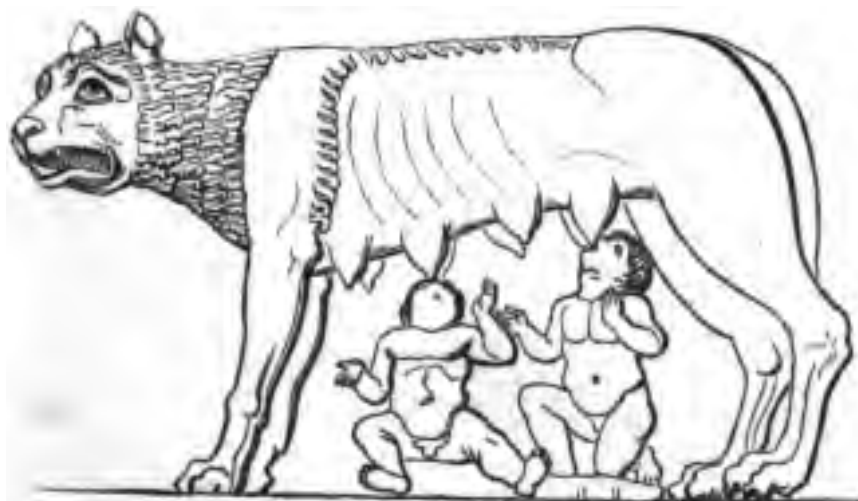
OF

ROME.

BY JOHN BONNER,
AUTHOR OF "A CHILD'S HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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THOUGH this is but a Child's Book, and makes no pretension to scholarship, it is perhaps only right that I should acknowledge my obligations to the Rt. Hon. Sir G. Cornwall Lewis, from whose Inquiry into the Credibility of early Roman History I have derived valuable aid.

It seems to be generally admitted that Sir G. C. Lewis has proved the non-historical character of the scheme of early Roman history proposed by Niebuhr, and adopted by subsequent writers. I am not aware that any material proposition in Sir George's iconoclastic theory has been controverted. No one, to my knowledge, has impugned either the statements of fact or the reasoning on which it rests. It has, however, been urged that we have a personal acquaintance with and affection for the characters whom it divests of historical reality, and that it is asking too much of us to require us to sacrifice them for the sake of the historical canon.

That we are naturally disposed to cling to the beautiful stories which have delighted mankind from Livy's time to our own, is

sufficiently proved by the persistent manner in which the discoveries of Niebuhr have been ignored in schools. Historical criticism has now made a further step, and Niebuhr himself has become obsolete. Shall we close our eyes to this new light too?

Notwithstanding the respect I feel for a recent high example, I am constrained to think that we should not. It appears to me that in this particular histories for children should be governed by as severe a canon as any other class of histories; and that the young should not be asked to receive as history that which, when they grow up, they will know to be fiction.

While, therefore, I have been careful to preserve the more striking of the early legends, including some which are rarely found in school-books, I have given them in their original shape, as legends, and have commenced the History of Rome with the year 282 B.C.

J. B.

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CHILD'S HISTORY OF ROME.

CHAPTER I.

ROME, BEFORE CHRIST 282.

FAR away over the sea, by the side of the River Tiber in Italy, stands the brave old city of ROME. It is not a very thriving place; the great cities of the United States are far more stirring and noisy; there are no railroads there, nor factories, nor clusters of masts like reeds in the river, nor smoke from tall chimneys clouding the sky. The people who live there are not fond of work or trade. In numbers they are perhaps equal to the people of Boston; but of these a great many are foreigners, many more are long-robed priests and monks who help the Pope to govern his Church, and many are beggars. The streets are narrow and dirty; on grand holidays they are filled with bright equipages and crowds of merry people who go to see the Pope and the other rare sights; but oftener they are so still and desolate that it would sadden your heart to walk through them, and you would feel, when you gazed at the huge remains of old Rome, as if you were standing in a grave-yard looking at tombstones.

A long, long while ago—nearly three hundred years before our Saviour was born—this old city of Rome stood in the same place, by the side of the Tiber, which rolled its muddy waters past the houses, and sometimes overflowed its banks and drove the people to the high ground—just as it does to this day. A very different city though, from the Rome we see at the present time.

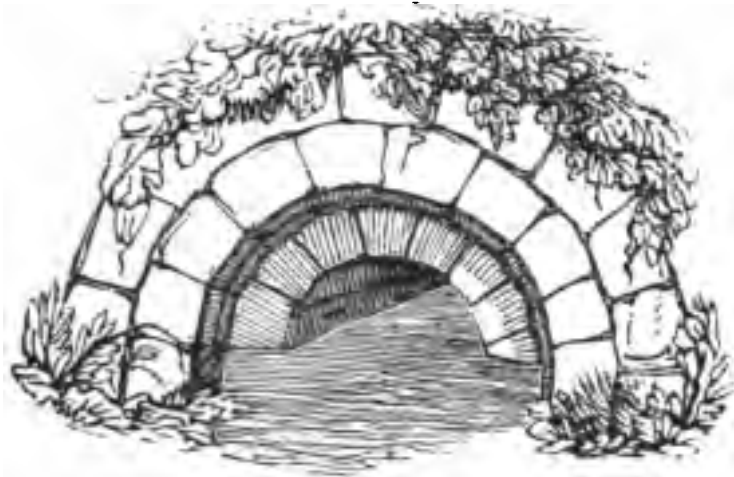
It was walled round, and within the walls were inclosed seven hills. You might walk over some of these hills to-day without noticing them—the earth and ruins have been so washed down from their tops into the valleys between them. But at the time I speak of there were seven quite distinct and separate. Of these the most famous were the hill of the CAPITOL—on which stood a strong fort called the Capitol, frowning down over the river, a fine temple, and a statue of Jupiter so tall that it could be seen miles off—and the AVENTINE hill, about which there were many pleasant legends and stories.

The walls were too big for the city. In places the rocky sides of the hills lay bare, and here and there the ground had not been cleared of trees. On the tops of the hills stood temples and the best houses; narrow and crooked streets crossed the valleys beneath. Most of the houses were small, one story high, built of wood or coarse brick, and shingled or thatched; many of them, I dare say, no finer or more convenient than the log-cabins of the West. Under some of the houses were shops which had no doors or windows, but were open to the street and closed behind.

The principal street in Rome was Sacred Street : it ran through a square, or open oblong space between two of the hills, which was called the FORUM. This was the market-place : it was here that public meetings were held. At one end of it a platform had been raised for speakers to stand on when they addressed the people : on either side were shops with stone columns between them, and among these shops stood on one side the Senate-house, on another two fine temples. In the middle of the square grew three trees—an olive, a fig, and a vine—and not far from these, two or three bronze statues had been set up.

It was a very famous place, the Forum ; and I have said this much about it in order that you may have some picture of it in your eye when you hear it mentioned in this history.

There were many temples at Rome, but as they long ago crumbled into dust, we know little or nothing about them. There was an aqueduct, called the Appian Aqueduct after its builder, an old Roman named APPIUS CLAUDIUS, about whom there were many famous stories. This aqueduct brought water to the city from a source eight miles off. And there was a great drain, which, I think, was the most wonderful work of ancient Rome. People said it had been built by an old king of Rome, whose name was SERVIUS TULLIUS, two hundred years ago and more : any how, it was very old, and so wide that a cart and horse could drive through it, and so strong that it does its duty still, and not a stone of it has mouldered away. I wonder how our drains will look two thousand years hence !



MOUTH OF THE GREAT DRAIN.

I do not know how many people lived at Rome at this time; perhaps not many less than it contains now. It was the chief city of the Roman Republic, which spread along the lovely western coast of Italy for many a mile, and covered perhaps about as much ground as South Carolina, with perhaps as many inhabitants as there are in Massachusetts.

Though Rome was a republic, it was a different republic from Virginia, or New York, or the United States. In these latter, as you know, all white men are born equal. In Rome it was not so. There were three classes of Romans: nobles, citizens, and people who had no vote. The last class—which was chiefly composed of the sons of freed slaves and foreign-born residents—had no power and very few rights.

The other two classes—the nobles and the citizens—were equal in name; that is to say, they were all equally eligible to office. But the government was so contrived that the nobles had, in fact, the lion's share both of power and of offices.

These nobles were of two kinds. Some of them

were men of old families who traced their descent back for a prodigious length of time, and had come by their nobility no one knew how. These were the proudest and the most famous. They were called **PATRICIANS**. Other nobles became so from their fathers or ancestors having held high office under the republic: they were called simply nobles.

The Romans had no legislative assemblies composed of persons chosen by the people to represent them; nothing like the Legislatures of the States, or the United States Congress.

The people met together once a year at the city of Rome to choose magistrates. There were **two assemblies of the people**: one in which they voted by tribes, according to the place where they lived—as we would say, by districts or counties; the other in which they voted by classes according to their wealth.

In the **ASSEMBLY BY TRIBES** each tribe had one vote. The Roman people were at this time divided into thirty-three tribes, of which the city of Rome contained four; the other twenty-nine being made up of the people who lived in the country. This was, as you see, a clumsy way of finding out the will of the people; still it was fair and democratic.

In the **ASSEMBLY BY CLASSES** all the people in the republic were rated according to their wealth: men worth so much being in one class, those worth so much less being in another, and so on down to those who were worth nothing, who were in a class by themselves. Each class had one vote; and this assembly was so contrived—the rich forming many

classes, but the poor few—that the former could generally carry every thing their own way. The idea was that the opinion of a rich man ought to weigh as much as that of a thousand poor men; an idea which has, I think, prevailed in other places besides Rome.

The assembly by tribes chose the inferior magistrates—the assembly by classes the superior ones.

Both assemblies could make laws for the republic, with the consent of the Senate. The assembly by tribes could make laws without the consent of the Senate, if it insisted upon it; but this it rarely did.

The **SENATE** was the great Council of the Roman nation. Once upon a time it had been composed of the old nobles only. But as they died out their places were given to men whom the people had elected to office. Thus a man could be a Senator without being a noble. But it generally happened—and for very plain reasons—that most of the Senators were nobles either of the old or new kind. They held office for life.

The Senate did the work which in the United States is divided between the Cabinet at Washington and Congress. It could make laws on all subjects, with the consent of the assembly by classes, and sometimes without. It had charge of all the money affairs of the republic; levied the taxes and spent them; made war and peace; directed the movements of the armies, and chose which general was to lead them; took care of the religion of the State, and generally managed the public business.

To help the Senate, the people elected every year

in the assembly by classes two Consuls, two Censors, and a Prætor.

The **CONSULS** were the chief magistrates of Rome. They saw that the laws were obeyed, and led the armies. Without the city their power was supreme; within the walls they were under the control of the Senate.

The **CENSORS** were something like the United States Secretary of the Treasury and Secretary of the Interior rolled into one. They collected the taxes and paid out the public money; managed the public lands and works; counted the fighting men (the Romans did not think women and children worth counting), and settled every man's rank—whether a noble, a citizen, or a person without a vote. This last duty gave the Censor a great deal of power, and made him a very important personage; and the Romans said, when he walked through the streets in his bright scarlet robe with his axemen before him, that he looked like a king.

The **PRÆTOR** was what we should call a Judge or Chief Justice.

In seasons of great peril or difficulty the Senate often decided that a superior magistrate to all these should be appointed. He was called a **DICTATOR**. One of the Consuls appointed him with great ceremony at the dead of night. He was master of all Rome, and had the same power as a general or military governor has in modern times when martial law has been proclaimed. But his term of office was only six months.

The assembly by tribes chose several inferior

magistrates. Of these the most important were the Tribunes of the People and the Ædiles.

The special business of the TRIBUNES OF THE PEOPLE was to protect the people from the nobles. There were ten of them altogether, and their power was very great indeed—much greater than that of the President of the United States, or the Governors of the States. They sat at the door of the Senate-house; and when a bill was passed which they did not like they said, “We veto it,” and it could not be passed afterward, no matter how great the majority in its favor. They could propose the laws they wanted to the assembly by tribes, and see that they were executed. They had nothing to do with money affairs, and were inferior to the Consuls; but they could compel the Consuls to do their duty; they could forbid their doing any act which did not suit the people; they could rescue any man from justice. To add to all, their persons were sacred, and any man who killed a Tribune became an outlaw, and his property was forfeit.

The ÆDILES, of whom there were four, were a sort of Common Council, and managed the affairs of the city of Rome.

The most curious thing about these old Roman magistrates is, that they were not paid by the state or the people. From the Dictator to the Ædiles, all served the public for honor only. It was a grand idea, no doubt; but I am afraid it kept out of office all poor men, and allowed the rich alone—who are not always the best or the wisest men in a country by any means—to rise to posts of honor and pow-

er. I fancy we shall see, as this history goes on, that the no-pay plan was the dearest in the end.

There was another reason why poor men had very little chance of rising at Rome. One of the Roman customs was, that the *Ædiles* should give shows to the people. I think I have heard of some modern *Ædiles* who once tried to set a similar fashion in a country a long way from Rome; but I believe they did not propose to pay for the fire-works and processions out of their own pocket. The Roman *Ædiles* did; and hence, of course, it was not easy for a man to be chosen *Ædile* (the people being monstrously fond of show) unless he were rich.

This alone, perhaps, would not have mattered much; but it very soon became a settled custom at Rome that men should rise, step by step, from *Ædile* to *Prætor*, from *Prætor* to *Consul*, from *Consul* to *Censor*, and so on: it was very rare indeed that a man was elected to any of the superior offices unless he had been *Ædile* first. In this way poor men were pretty effectually shut out.

The Romans had no standing army. Every man old enough, and not too old to carry arms, was obliged to serve either twenty campaigns on foot or ten with a horse; and after that he was expected to go home and become a peaceable citizen again.

I dare say this long account of the Roman government and institutions is tedious; but you can not enjoy the history of Rome without understanding these things.

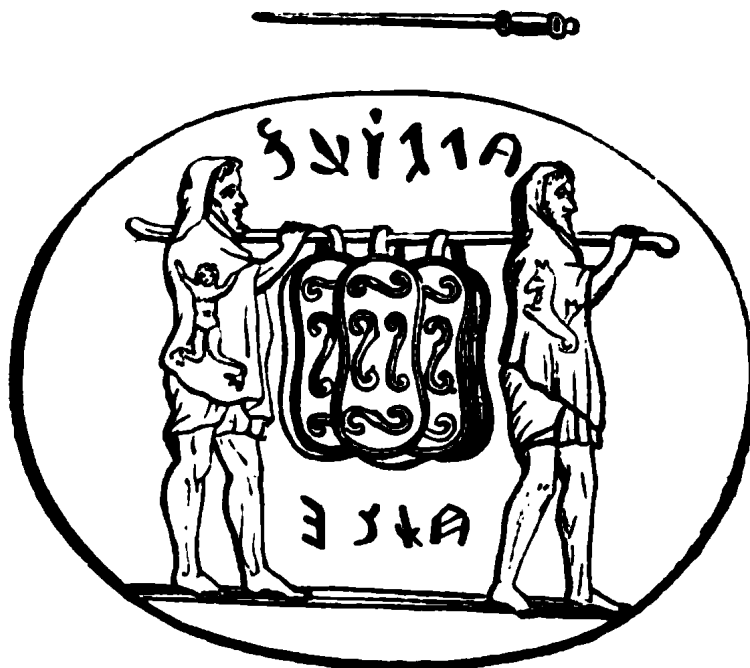
You know that, as the time I am speaking of was nearly three hundred years before Christ, the Ro-



ROMAN SOLDIER.

mans were not Christians. They were a very religious people, though, in their way.

The chief of their gods at this time seems to have been Mars, the god of war—a very proper deity for a fighting people like the Romans. In honor of this Mars sacred shields were carried in procession from time to time; and the story ran that one of these shields had fallen from heaven long, long ago. But as Rome grew, and the Romans mixed more with their neighbors the Etruscans, and the Greeks, who were both very religious races, they adopted the



SACRED SHIELD OF MARS.

Etruscan gods and the Greek gods, and worshipped them all. It would take me too long to tell you of all these gods and goddesses. Some of the most famous were Ceres, the goddess of farming; Vulcan,



CYBELE.



PAN.

the god of smith-work ; Diana, the goddess of hunting ; Apollo, the god of eloquence ; Neptune, the god of the sea ; Pan, the god of the country ; Priapus, the god of gardens ; Silenus, a drunken god, whom you see in the cut seated on a wine-sack ; Flora, the goddess of flowers ; Cybele, the goddess



JUPITER.



PRIAPUS.



FLORA.

of the earth. There was a goddess of love, called Venus; a goddess of wisdom, Minerva; a god of roguery, Mercury; gods of home, the Lares and Penates; and a great many others. The head or chief god was Jupiter, who ruled heaven and earth, and lived (very unhappily they said), with his wife Juno, on the top of some mountain in the clouds: a brother of Jupiter, whose name was Pluto, reigned over the infernal regions.

Besides these gods in a regular way of business, the Romans always felt themselves at liberty to make their great men gods after death; just as,

in much later times, the Christian popes and bishops made saints of the best and greatest of the martyrs and priests.

The Roman worship was very different from ours. They had no Sunday; and though they had priests without end, they were not in the habit of preaching sermons. Every Roman prayed to the god he liked best, and in his own way; but the general fashion was to wind up all prayers with a small present to the god. I suppose the priests took care that these presents went straight to the mountain in the clouds where the gods lived.

The most common sort of present was a sacrifice



SILENUS.



JUNO AND MERCURY.

—either a bullock, ox, lamb, kid, or some other animal, which was slaughtered, at an altar raised for the purpose, with many fine ceremonies. Nothing of importance was done without a sacrifice.

Besides the priests the Romans had a large body of fortune-tellers, who were called AUGURS. These augurs fancied or pretended they could find out the future by looking up at the sky and seeing which way the lightning flashed, and by watching the inside of dead animals, and the like. As they were lodged in a fine building at the public expense, and were very much respected, and had a great deal of power, I am not surprised that there were always a good many augurs, and that they did their best to prove that the people would be very badly off without them. But I am a little astonished that the Ro-

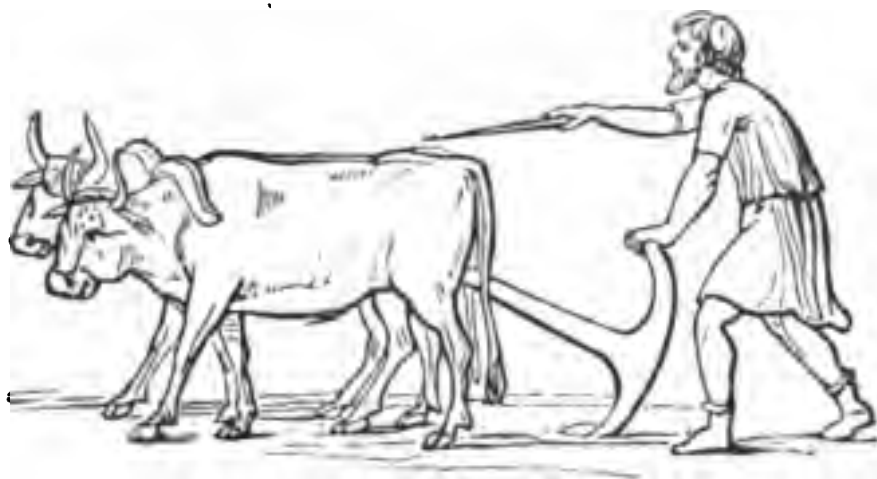
mans, who were so very sensible a people on many points, were customers of theirs for so many years.

There were two kinds of riches at Rome—land and slaves. Rome contained no rich manufacturers or rich merchants. It was thought beneath a Roman to engage in trade: a Senator who did so was degraded. Nearly all the trade and industry of Rome was carried on by slaves, or freed-slaves. The only peaceful work which the Romans thought honorable was husbandry—tilling the ground, rearing cattle, growing vines.

Many persons who lived in the city owned farms which they wrought with slaves. Many who did not own land or slaves, made a living by begging from rich men. We should think very meanly of a man who, being able to work, preferred to beg; but the Romans thought differently, and these beggars



FEMALES WORSHIPPING.



ROMAN FLOWING.

or hangers-on—they were called politely **CLIENTS**—were very numerous indeed; and rich men took pride in having a crowd of them at their doors of a morning, and at their heels when they went out.

The Romans were, at this time, what we should call an ignorant people; that is to say, they had no books, and hardly any writing beyond the rolls of the Censors, a few notes of laws, and the like. Most of them despised learning, and thought—as our ancestors the old Britons and their neighbors did a thousand years afterward—that it was disgraceful for a man who could use a sword to be a scholar.

A few persons at Rome were lawyers, and explained the laws—some of which were engraven on tablets of brass—to the people at large. Nearly all the Senators were good speakers, and many of them were probably very eloquent, as unlettered men often are. There were no doctors at Rome; but rich men kept a slave, who knew something about physic, to tend them when they were ill.

Though they had no books of prose or poetry, there floated among the Romans of this day quite a

number of old ballads, or legends, or stories about the gods and the early history of Rome; and the rich and noble Romans were very fond of hearing these ballads sung to them after dinner, just as the old barons and chief men of much later ages used to have the bands and minstrels sing to them, and celebrate the fame of their ancestors in wild, rude songs.

Listening to these songs was the favorite amusement of the Roman nobles. The people preferred horse-racing and chariot-racing; and every year at the shows—especially the September shows, which were the finest—all the people came up to Rome, and thronged the circus outside the walls, and took as much pleasure in seeing the horses tear round the course as if their lives had depended on the result. They used to bet heavily, and as each horse wore ribbons of a certain color, those who backed him adorned their dress with ribbons of the like hue; and when the horses were set off, the air would be filled with shouts—"Hurra for the Blue!" "The Red forever!" "Yellow ahead!" "Bravo Green!" and so on.

You must not suppose, however, that at this time the Romans were a frivolous people, fond of nothing but sport. They were brave, they were manly, they were patient, they were persevering; no danger ever frightened them, nothing ever broke their courage. They loved their country well; and every man of them was ready to die for Rome.

Such was the condition of Rome and the Roman people two thousand one hundred and thirty-eight years ago, when this history begins.

What the Romans were, what they did, how they lived before this time, I can not tell you, for I do not know.

As they despised learning, they had no histories, and no complete record of their laws.

The first Roman historian lived about sixty years after the time at which this history begins.

Happily, during those sixty years, the Greeks, who were a lettered people, came to hear of the Romans, and wrote about them. So I begin my history with the first Greek accounts of Rome.

Still, though the Romans had no histories, they had, as I mentioned before, a great many pleasant legends, and ballads, and stories about their ancestors, which the minstrels used to sing at noblemen's dinners, and old men used to tell to their children of a summer's evening under a spreading beech-tree, or beside the blazing hearth on a winter night. Many of these old legends and stories—which were not written—were handed down from minstrel to minstrel, and from old man to old man, till they reached the old, old historians who began to write the history of Rome more than two thousand years ago.

These old, old historians put them in their histories, and no doubt believed them. I dare say they added a little here and there; trimmed the stories so as to make them read smoothly, and added ballad to ballad, and story to story, till they made out of the whole a history of Rome for four hundred and seventy-two years before this Child's History begins. I should like very much to carry my history back all this time; but as I am quite certain that a great

part of these stories were invented long afterward, and as the rest are wholly without proof, I can not honestly do so.

I dare say some of the stories are founded on fact. I have no doubt, for instance, that when a Roman saw the great drain I have mentioned, and would ask, "Who built it?" and people would answer, "Old King Servius Tullius, who was so good to the people, and about whom there is this fine old ballad"—I have no doubt, I say, but there would be some truth in the ballad. In the same way, when a Roman boy would ask his father the meaning of the word Consul, and how Rome came to be ruled by Consuls, I think it quite likely there would be some stray relic of the truth in the story which the father would tell him. And I should not be surprised if many of the men who are mentioned in the ballads and stories, the later ones especially, did really live, and perform some of the deeds ascribed to them.

On this account, and also because these old stories are very beautiful and famous, I can not leave them out altogether. I will tell you them in the first Book of this Child's History. They may give you a faithful picture of the Romans in these old, old times; but you must remember that they are no more history than the Scarlet Letter or the song of Hiawatha.

BOOK I.

STORIES AND LEGENDS.

CHAPTER II.

THE LEGEND OF ROMULUS.

THE first of the old Roman legends is about Romulus and the building of Rome.

It says that when the Greeks had overcome the Trojans, and taken Troy, the Trojan chief, ÆNEAS, fled with his father, ANCHISES, and his little son, ASCANIUS, to seek a new home in a foreign land. It tells how he wandered far and wide—driven from coast to coast by the stormy wind, and suffering hardships and mishaps of all kinds—till, at last, he found a quiet resting-place in the sunny plains about the middle of the western shore of Italy. There he settled, and having married the daughter of the king of the country, he succeeded to the throne, and reigned wisely and well for many years. After him reigned his son, Ascanius, and after him his sons for many generations.

It is quite certain that the story of Æneas, and that of Romulus too, were made up long and long after the time at which they are said to have lived. However, as I have told you already that these are

mere fanciful stories, not by any means to be believed, I will go on.

One of the descendants of Æneas died, leaving two sons. **NUMITOR** was the eldest, and should have succeeded to the throne at his father's death. But he was a quiet, easy-going person, and did not care for royalty or trouble of any kind; so, when his brother **AMULIUS**, who was ambitious and violent, said he must have the throne, Numitor gave it up to him without a struggle, and went away to his farm to live quietly.

This was not enough for the wicked Amulius. He contrived to catch his brother's son and put him to death. Next his daughter, whose name was **SYLVIA**, and who was afterward called Rea Sylvia, or Sylvia the Dishonored, he seized, and forced to become a Vestal Virgin.



VESTAL VIRGIN.

These Vestal Virgins were a sort of Roman nuns, whose business it was to keep a fire alight in certain temples, and who took a solemn vow not to marry.

Then Amulius thought he was safe. But one day, as Sylvia was going to a spring to draw water, a wolf sprang out of the wood and frightened her. She ran to hide herself in a cave hard by, and there the god MARS paid her a visit and won her heart. Some of the old legends wickedly pretend that it wasn't the god at all, but only a handsome soldier whose name Sylvia was afraid to tell on account of her vow ; but this matters little.

Sylvia gave birth to two fine boys. But, alas ! just as the twins came into the world, the fire which she was to keep alight went out, and Amulius at once guessed what had happened. Furious at being deceived, he ordered his niece and her two little babes to be thrown into the river. It was so done, no one daring to disobey the cruel order, or showing any pity for the young mother or her new-born infants. She was drowned ; but the twins were carried away in their cradle by the tide, like Moses, and were landed near the foot of a wild fig-tree on the banks of the Tiber.

They whimpered and cried, poor things ! alone on that desert beach : they would soon have died, but for a she-wolf, which heard them and came to their relief. She seized them with her rough paws, carried them off to her lair, made them a bed of leaves, licked them, and nursed them. Very soon they grew fond of their growling foster-mother, and took

suck from her just as the little wolves did. Then a woodpecker flew to them, and brought them fruits and berries; and other birds fluttered and chirped round them, and killed the insects which might have stung them.

They were living in this pleasant way when the shepherd of their grandfather Numitor found them in the woods and took them home to his wife. She was a kind-hearted woman—treated the little foundlings tenderly, and brought them up with her twelve sons till they were men. One was named ROMULUS, the other REMUS.

They helped the shepherd to keep Numitor's flocks; and as they were strong, wild youths, and lived in a wild age, they often got into fights with their neighbors. After one of these fights, Remus was taken prisoner by his enemies and led before old Numitor, his grandfather. The old man, who did not know him, was just going to condemn him to death, when the shepherd came running in, and told his master who Remus and his brother were.

You may fancy how pleased old Numitor was to find that his grandsons, who he believed had been drowned nearly twenty years before, were still alive, and such bold, stout young fellows. Better still he may have liked it, when Romulus and Remus gathered their friends together, buckled on their swords, and fell upon the usurper, Amulius, with might and main. They soon chopped off his wicked head, and made their grandfather King of Alba in his place.

But these bold brothers were not content with this. They wanted a city of their own on the banks of the

Tiber, where they had been found by the she-wolf. Away they started, with several of their friends as bold as themselves, and soon found a place to suit them.

Then said Romulus, "I will build my city here."

But Remus replied that it ought to be built a little lower down.

Romulus said he would be the King.

But Remus answered that he had as good right to be King as his brother.

To settle the dispute, they agreed that each brother should take his stand on a hill at midnight, and the first one who saw any thing strange in the sky should be King. Remus stood on his hill all night, all next day, and a great part of the next night: then he saw six vultures flying from north to south.

So he ran to his brother and shouted that he had won. But Romulus said that it was quite a mistake; that he, too, had seen a sign in the sky; that vultures had flown past him, and not six only, but twelve. At this Remus made a great outcry, and said he was cheated; but Romulus, being the stronger of the two, didn't mind him in the least, but set about building his city, which he called ROME.

He marked its outline with a plow so as to inclose a hill which was afterward called Mount Palatine. Then he raised a little wall, to serve as a rampart in case of attack.

Remus, as you may suppose, had not forgiven his brother yet. His heart was still full of anger and envy. So, as he happened to be standing by when

Romulus built his little wall, he laughed at it, and said that so puny a rampart might answer to keep out children; as for men, why they could jump over it; and he suited the action to the word, and leaped over the wall.

In the first burst of his wrath Romulus struck his brother dead at a blow. Afterward, says the story, he was very sorry for what he had done, and starved himself, and placed a second throne beside his own for Remus's ghost to sit on, if it thought fit; all which, no doubt, did a great deal of good to his poor murdered brother.

Romulus and his Romans thought very little of knocking men dead, brothers or not; they were an unruly, fractious set of fellows. They were glad to welcome to their city any body and every body, no matter whence they came, or what crimes they had been guilty of; and thus, in a short time, Rome soon got a very bad name. So bad a name, indeed, that the ladies of the neighborhood wouldn't associate with the Romans, and a poor Roman who wanted to marry couldn't get a wife on any terms.

In this strait, bold Romulus hit upon a famous plan. He gave out that he would hold a fair at Rome on a given day, and invited all his neighbors to come and see the games, and bring their wives and daughters with them. On the day fixed, they came in scores—fair Latins, bright-eyed Siculians, and more numerous than either, beautiful Sabine maidens—all dressed in their best, and seeming, you may be sure, very lovely indeed to the bachelor Romans.

The games began, and the ladies were in high good-humor, laughing and clapping their hands, when, all at once, the Romans made a rush, each seized the prettiest girl he could lay hands on, and made off with her. They never stopped to look back till they were inside the walls of Rome, and had safely locked up their blushing and weeping captives. Then they looked over the wall, and asked the fathers and the brothers whether any thing could be done for them ?

These worthy people took the matter very quietly, and went home each to his own country. At last, after much thinking, they made war on the Romans. But they managed it so badly—each fighting alone, instead of joining all together—that Romulus easily overcame them.

All but the Sabines. They were the strongest and most warlike of the Romans' neighbors ; but they, of all the nations whose daughters had been carried off, were the slowest to think of avenging the insult. At last, when Romulus had defeated all the others, the Sabines made ready to fight, and their King, TATius, marched down against Rome with a great army.

Brave Romulus was not dismayed. He shut himself up in his city, barred the gates, and set men to watch on the walls. On came the Sabines ; round and round the place marched they, but could not get in.

Then said King Tatius to the Roman maiden TARPEIA :

“ Open, I pray you, the gate over which your

father is captain, and you shall have for reward whatever you will."

"Give me," said the covetous Tarpeia, looking at the golden ornaments he wore, "all the bracelets of gold, and the collars of gold which the Sabine soldiers wear, and I will open the gate."

"They shall be thine, fair maiden," replied the King. And he bade his men march forward to the gate. Each soldier, as he passed, threw to Tarpeia his bracelet of gold and his collar of gold: so many were there, and so weighty were they, that the luckless maiden was crushed to death by the load, on the very spot where she stood.

In then rushed the Sabines, eager for the fight. Up stood bold Romulus, who, seeing how he had been betrayed, called to his men to strike one good blow for freedom and for Rome. On either side fierce looks and fiery words showed how deadly would be the fray.

Then it was that a crowd of women, with wild gestures and loose flowing hair, ran between the two armies. They were the Sabine women who had been carried off by the Romans, and who now loved their husbands with all the warmth of their warm hearts. They clung to the knees of their fathers and their brothers, and besought them to spare the men they loved. Some flung themselves on the necks of their husbands, and prayed them not to spill the blood of their kinsmen.

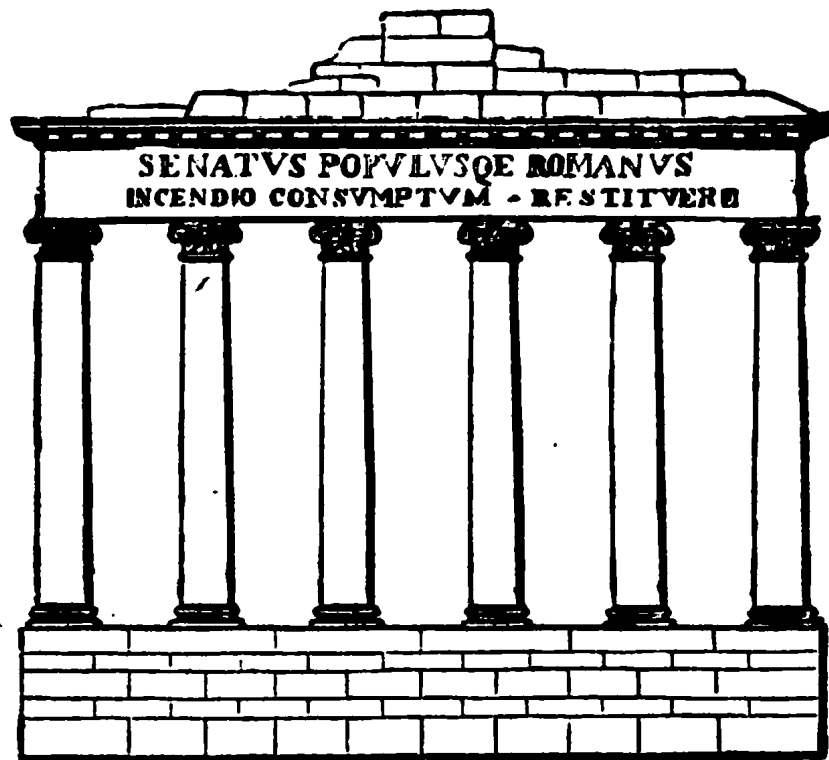
This settled the dispute, of course. The Sabines said there was no use fighting, as the women seemed so happy, and all parties agreed to be friends. They

even went so far as to become one nation, with two kings—Romulus and Tatius—until the latter died, when Romulus ruled alone.

Long afterward the rock on which stood the gate which Tarpeia opened to the Sabines was known as the Tarpeian Rock. There stood her tomb. It is not there now: time has swept it away; but deep quarries have been dug into the rock, and strange stories are told of the sights that are seen in their dark hollows. In some gloomy recess in these quarries, a nook far removed from the daylight—say the Roman girls—still sits Tarpeia, glittering with gold and jewels. She can not stir hand or foot. A spell that can not be broken binds her to the spot; but she is covered with rich golden bracelets and golden collars, and wherever her glance falls it rests upon gold. Thus, say the girls of the forum, she has her reward.

In the fullness of time Romulus died. One story says he was taken up to the mountain of the gods in a flaming chariot of fire by his father, the god Mars. Another pretends he took a different road, and sank out of sight in a swamp, amidst thunder and lightning.

Any way, he did not live forever; and so his story comes to an end.



TEMPLE OF SATURN.

CHAPTER III.

THE LEGEND OF NUMA.

AFTER the death of Romulus, says the legend, the Romans met and chose a Sabine to be their King. His name was **NUMA POMPILIUS**; and the story ran that he had been born on the very day that Rome was founded, which is just as likely to be true as any thing else we know of him.

A quiet, peaceable old King he was—in the legend—who managed to live on good terms with his neighbors, and taught his subjects to busy themselves with their trades and their farms instead of cutting other men's throats. He built a temple to the two-faced god, JANUS, which was to be kept open in time of war, and shut in time of peace; and took care to keep it shut close during the whole

of his reign. He made a number of laws to improve the morals of the people—they were sadly in need of improvement—and to foster the worship of the heathen gods. He likewise tried his hand at setting the calendar straight. In the time of Romulus there were only ten months in the year. Numa is said to have added a couple, without, however, making the year of the right length, as he knew nothing of astronomy.



JANUS.

Old Romans, a couple of thousand years ago, used to tell their children of a fine summer's evening, how the good King Numa was beloved by the beautiful goddess EGERIA. She was a fairy who dwelt in a sacred grove, and gave Numa good advice when he visited her there.

Among other useful things which she taught him was the art of reading the future by means of omens, taken from the lightning and the flight of birds. For instance, when Numa was about to perform any important act, she taught him to climb a hill—just as Romulus and Remus did—and watch the sky. If he saw a flash of lightning or a flock of birds in the east, it meant that he might safely go on with what he intended to do. If, on the other hand, the lightning flashed, or the birds flew on the west, then he was not on any account to persist in his undertaking. It was a very pretty system, but it must have led to some awkward blunders.

She likewise gave him lessons in the art of magic, so that he should be able to get the better of evil spirits and demons. Once, it is said, an evil demon appeared to him with mischievous intentions. The demon accosted him in a terrible voice, beginning, "Cut a head—" Numa interrupted him with, "from an onion in my garden." The demon went on, "of a man." "The topmost hairs," added Numa, quickly. "I demand a life," again began the demon, trying a new tack; but Numa was as quick as before in saying, "of a fish." Upon which, says the story, the demon gave up the contest and went away. This shows us that the old Roman demons must have been a very inferior article.

The most wonderful thing that the fairy Egeria ever did for Numa was turning the earthenware dishes on his table into gold, and the plain food upon them into delicious viands. But even this is nothing to the feats performed by some of our fairies in the books of fairy tales which you have read.

At the ripe old age of eighty, the good King Numa was gathered to his fathers. The people mourned him, as well they might. As for his friend the fairy, she was so overcome by grief, that after weeping long and copiously, she found it simpler in the end to turn herself into a fountain, which may still pour out tears of sorrow for any thing we know to the contrary.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LEGEND OF TULLUS HOSTILIUS.

THE next story is about TULLUS HOSTILIUS, who was said to have been the third King of Rome. He was a desperate warrior, and was all for quarreling and fighting with his neighbors.

His first war was with his neighbors the Albans, who, the Romans said, had plundered their fields. Away marched King Tullus with his fighting men to the Alban boundary, and there he met the King of Alba with all his army drawn out in battle array.

Said the King of Alba, "Let us settle this quarrel of ours, O Romans, by a duel of three on a side."

Said King Tullus, "With all my heart."

It chanced that there were in the Roman army three brothers named the HORATII, men of great courage and strength. These Tullus chose to be the champions of Rome. In the Alban army, too, there were three brothers, bold and strong, who were called the CURIATII. They were chosen as the champions of Alba. And it was agreed that if the Horatii won the day, then the Albans should submit to the Romans; but if the Curiatii were the conquerors, that Rome should be subject to Alba.

Into the plain then stepped the champions with bold faces and high hearts; and all the men of Alba, and all the men of Rome gathered round them to

see the deadly fight. None spoke, and many held their breath as the brothers met the brothers, and swords clashed and rang upon shields.

Very soon a shout arose from the Albans—a shout of joy; for one of the Curiatii had killed one of the Horatii. The Romans hung their heads, and looked anxiously—how anxiously!—at the remaining two brothers.

After a little while the Albans shouted again. Another of the Horatii was dead. Their champions, the Curiatii, were all wounded, but still stood their ground firmly. The Romans stamped their feet with rage, and gnashed their teeth. They had but one champion left; and he—oh shame!—was running away.

Mid scornful cries from the Albans, and bitter curses from his own friends, the last of the three Roman brothers ran slowly across the plain. After him ran, as fast as they could, the three wounded Curiatii. Dark, very dark then seemed the prospects of Rome.

But as the two armies stood gazing, the flying Roman stopped suddenly short, turned round quickly on the nearest of his pursuers, and laid him dead at a blow.

The Albans ceased to shout and hiss, and the Romans to murmur.

Up limped the second of the Curiatii—the third was yet behind—and made at the Roman; but his arm was weak, and with a single stroke of his sword Horatius slew him.

“These two,” he shouted, “have I slain to an-

swer for my dead brothers; the third will I offer as a sacrifice to my country."

And as the last of the Curiatii drew near, bleeding and exhausted, the Roman cleft his skull with a heavy blow.

'Twas then the Romans' turn to shout, and the Albans' to bewail their sad fate. Proudly marched Tullus back to the city, with the champion Horatius by his side, and the arms of the vanquished Curiatii borne aloft in triumph. They were at the gate, and the women of Rome—who had gathered to meet them—were rejoicing at their speedy return, when a young girl sprang forward with a shriek.

It was the sister of the Horatii. No one had thought of her when the bloody fight began; but she was betrothed to one of the Curiatii. When she learned that her lover was dead, and that her own brother had been his murderer, she turned to him and cursed him in her cruel despair.

So bitterly she cursed him, that he flew into a rage, drew his red sword once more, and laid her, too, dead at his feet. A sad day of butchery that!

The judges had the murderer arrested and brought before them. They even sentenced him to death. But the people were too proud of him, and too thankful for his victory, to suffer him to be punished. It was arranged that he should do penance for the murder by walking under a yoke, after which he was set free.

Then Tullus, having settled with the Albans, went to war with some other neighbors of his called

Etruscans, and called upon the Albans to help him, according to their bargain. The Alban chief, METTIUS FUFFETIUS, was a cunning, double-faced rogue. He pretended to be quite willing to help the Romans, and marched by their side; but, at the same time, he sent word to the Etruscans that he was on their side.

When the battle began he drew back his men upon a hill, and neither helped one side nor the other. But when Tullus and his bold men, after much hard fighting, drove back the Etruscans, and put them to flight, the cunning Alban came thundering down the hill, and charged the flying Etruscans as though he was the best friend the Romans had in the world.

Rogue as he was, King Tullus was a match for him. He pretended he did not know the Albans had hung back till the victory was decided; and sent word to Mettius, in a pleasant, friendly way, that he was much obliged to him, and would he come and get his share of the spoil?

Of course he would, said the Alban. And he went accordingly with all his men. They left their arms behind them, it seems, which was a sad mistake; for as soon as they had entered the Roman camp, the King gave the signal: they were surrounded, and Mettius was seized.

Tullus then reproached him with his treachery, and wound up by saying, that as he was so fond of being on both sides at once, he would help him to do so more easily in future. So saying, he had the wretched man's limbs bound to wild horses, then

started the horses, which galloped off furiously in different directions, and tore the hapless Alban's body asunder. As for his subjects, they were made to live at Rome, and their city was razed to the ground.

After this King Tullus got into more wars with other neighbors of his, and there was more slashing and breaking of heads. He was so fond of fighting that when a shower of thunderbolts fell on the Alban Mount he wanted to fight with Jupiter himself; on which the god, to punish him, shot a flash of lightning which consumed him and all his house.

So there was an end of his story.

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CHAPTER V.

THE STORY OF ANCUS MARTIUS.

THE story of ANCUS MARTIUS, who was said to have been the fourth King of Rome, is a very short one. Perhaps it was forgotten during those long ages when there was no writing, and the minstrels who used to sing it died away one by one.

There was, however, a bridge across the Tiber which the old Romans used to say was the work of Ancus Martius; and a quay at the mouth of the Tiber (which long ago fell to pieces and disappeared), with which his name was always interwoven. There was also a dark, dreary prison, dug out of the hill of the Capitol, which was laid to his charge; but nobody knows whether he dug it out or some one else.

The legends further said that he was a fighting King as well as a building King; that he fought his neighbors the Latins for year after year, and overcame them, and carried off much plunder from their cities, and scores upon scores of prisoners; but the Latins, though in these old legends they were always getting beaten and slaughtered, somehow were never any the worse.

Another story about Ancus Martius was that he befriended the people, and took their part against the nobles; so that, long after his day, the people of Rome used to praise him, and talk of the good old times of good King Ancus Martius.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LEGEND OF TARQUIN THE ELDER.

A LONG time ago, says the next story, a merchant from Corinth went to live in Italy with his children. After living there many years, he died, and left all his fortune to his son. Now it happened that at the place where they lived there were many rich nobles, who thought themselves a great deal better than other people, and despised the Corinthian merchant's son.

So this young man, being proud, resolved to leave the place and seek a home in some city where he should not be looked down upon. And as he saw no place so much to his mind as Rome, he packed up all his money and his treasures—he was very rich—and traveled thither with his wife TANAQUIL.

As he passed through the gate of Rome an eagle flew down with a swoop and plucked his hat from his head with its beak. Then, after sailing round and round him several times, this sensible bird flew down and put his hat back on his head again. He was very much astonished at this, as you may fancy; but his wife Tanaquil, who pretended to be a witch, said she knew the meaning of the eagle's conduct—that it was a sign he should one day be King of Rome.

I should not wonder if he said in reply that he

thought it a capital idea. For he set to work at once to gain the good will of the Romans ; which he was the better able to do as he was rich. He gave them fine shows, and helped the poor, and took care of widows and orphans, and in this way soon contrived to make every one like him. The people became so fond of him, that when Ancus died, and he made them a fine speech, assuring them that he was the very best man to be their king, they one and all cried : Yes he was. And they crowned him on the spot.

His name was LUCIUS TARQUINIUS PRISCUS, but we generally call him TARQUIN THE ELDER.

The story goes that he made war on his neighbors as usual, and this, at all events, is likely enough. It is said that in one of these wars the Sabines pressed him hard, and were about to cross the bridge over the Tiber to march upon Rome, but that he built a number of fire-rafts and set them adrift in the stream. They soon ran against the bridge, and burned it down ; all the people who were on it were drowned, and it was by seeing their bodies, charred and blackened by the fire, floating past the city, that the people at Rome first heard of the victory.

It was in King Tarquin's time, the legends say, that the augurs became important characters at Rome. I have told you already what their trade was, and how well they liked it.

One of their ways of finding out the future was by watching some chickens they kept. If the chickens would not feed, then misfortune was at hand, and whatever business was about to be done was

postponed. If, on the contrary, the chickens gobbled up their food greedily—as chickens have a way of doing in general—then all was right, and the business in hand might proceed.

King Tarquin, the story says, rather suspected the augurs of being rogues. Being one day with the chief of them, one ACCIUS NAVIUS—an uncommonly bold knave—he thought he would put him to the test, and asked him whether what he was thinking of could be done or not?

Navius looked up to heaven and down into the inside of an ox or two, paid a visit to the hen coop, and then said it could be done.

“Then,” said the King, handing him a razor and a whetstone, “I was thinking of cutting this whetstone with this razor!”

Navius, nothing daunted, took the razor and cut the whetstone in two with a single stroke.

This Navius had his statue set up in the Senate-house at Rome, and it stood there till very late times. I should not wonder if other augurs, long after his death, had made up this story of the razor and the whetstone, and told it to the people in order to convince them what very important personages augurs were, and how dangerous it was to oppose them.

The end of the story of Tarquin the Elder is very sad.

It seems that Ancus Martius had left two sons, who, forty years after their father’s death, began to find out that Tarquin was a usurper, and that they ought to be kings of Rome. So they hired two stout ruffians, and sent them to the palace, with orders to

dispatch the old King. When the ruffians asked to see Tarquin, he showed himself, fearing nothing; and one of them, then and there, laid open his head with a blow of an axe.

The Romans always believed that this Tarquin had begun the great drain which I have mentioned; it was, they say, completed by his successor.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LEGEND OF SERVIUS TULLIUS.

ABOUT the next King, SERVIUS TULLIUS, there are many pretty stories. One relates to his birth.

One day one of the servants of Queen Tanaquil, the wife of Tarquinius Priscus, went to her mistress, and said she had seen the face of a god in the fire. Tanaquil, who, as you remember, said she was a witch, answered that she knew what that meant. And she went away and got ready a cradle and some baby-clothes.

The baby was born sure enough, and while he lay in his cradle flames were seen dancing round his head. At this his mother screamed, and ran in her fright for water to put out the fire. But Tanaquil, in her grand way, bade her be still, saying that the flames could not burn the baby, and only meant that he was to be a great man.

Servius grew up, says the story, a fine manly youth, and fought in the wars of the time with valor. Tanaquil had taken such a fancy to him that she persuaded her husband to give him the chief power in the state next to himself.

When Tarquin was killed, as I have related, a great tumult arose. Soldiers rushed into the palace, and speedily put the murderers to death. Mean-

while the Queen and Servius Tullius carried off the body of the King, and gave out that he was not dead, but only much hurt. This they said lest the sons of Ancus should persuade the people to elect one of them king.

Servius Tullius took pretty good care that there should be no danger of any thing of that kind. Then, when all was secure, he confessed that the



FORTUNE.

King was dead, and asked the people whether they would have him to reign over them. They said they would, and thus the wicked sons of Ancus were foiled in their aim. Servius became king, and gratefully built temples to the goddess of Fortune.

It was this, perhaps, which put Servius in mind that Tarquin, too, had left two sons who might some day trouble him. To guard against any plots on their part, he resolved to marry them to his two daughters. Now it so happened that one of Tar-

quin's sons, ARUNS, was a mild, gentle youth, inclined to virtue; but the other, LUCIUS, was wicked, and ready for any mischief. So, of the two daughters of Servius, one was a gentle, virtuous girl; but her sister, TULLIA, was a horrible wretch, full of wickedness. Servius fancied that if he gave

his good daughter to the bad son of Tarquin, and the bad one to his good brother, the two good ones might leaven the whole lump; and he married them accordingly in this cross fashion. It was a bad plan, as you will soon see.

For, Servius Tullius being a good man and a kind king to the people, he made many laws to protect them from the oppression of the nobles, and took away from the latter a great deal of power of which they had made a bad use. This angered them against him; and after a time they began to conspire against him, and to plot his death.

Now it befell that the marriages of the King's daughters to Tarquin's sons did not answer as well as the old King had expected. Tullia hated her virtuous husband. Lucius despised his gentle wife. These two fancied they were in love with each other—as though such wretches could feel love—and, by mutual agreement, Tullia murdered her husband and Lucius his wife. Then they got married; and when the nobles, far from spurning them, asked Lucius would he join their plot, and be king after Servius was murdered?—he said he would.

So he put on a kingly robe, and walked straight to the Senate-house. The moment old Servius heard of it he sallied forth from his house, and went straight to confront the traitor. It was on the steps of the Senate-house he met him; and there the fearless old King began loudly to upbraid him with his crimes.

But he had hardly opened his mouth when Lucius seized the weak old man and hurled him down

the steps. Bleeding and maimed, the aged King raised himself from the ground and tried to totter home; but Lucius made a signal, and several murderers rushed upon him, ran him through with their swords, and threw his body into the street.

It lay there still when his daughter Tullia drove down in her chariot to see how her husband had fared. As the chariot drew near the spot where it lay the horses snorted, and the driver pulled them up in a great terror, pointing out to his mistress her father's mangled corpse.

"Fool!" she cried; "drive on!"

And the horses, urged by word and lash, tore wildly forward, dragging the chariot after them. Their hoofs trampled the old man's body, and his blood spurted up and dabbled his daughter's dress.

Ever after that day the street where this horrible scene was said to have taken place was called **WICKED STREET**. Good Romans shuddered as they walked through it at night, and thought of the fine old King, Servius Tullius, and his infamous daughter, Tullia.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LEGEND OF TARQUIN THE PROUD.

THE next story was a great favorite among the Romans; there was none the poor people loved so well to hear, after they had come from their work of an evening, and sat them down by their doors to watch the sun set.

It was about Lucius, who now took the title of King and the name of **TARQUIN**, to which the people afterward added the nickname of **THE PROUD**.

It had been written in the bargain between him and the nobles that they should be free to oppress the people, as they had done before the time of **Servius Tullius**. Tarquin kept his word: the nobles stripped the poor people of their lands, made them work for them on scanty food, and oppressed them so cruelly that many flung themselves into the **Tiber** to escape from their cruel taskmasters.

But no word had been said in the bargain about the way Tarquin should treat the nobles. So, while they were trampling the people, Tarquin fell to trampling them; and heavy as their foot was, the King's was heavier still: so heavy that the nobles began to think that they had made a bad bargain after all, and were better off under **Servius Tullius**.

The story ran that Tarquin had built the temple which stood on the **Capitol Hill**; and that when he

had spent all his own money, and all the money he could take from his neighbors in war, he turned round upon the nobles and the people of Rome, and forced them to help him on with the work. The nobles he forced to give money, imprisoning them if they refused; the poor people he drove in gangs to the top of the hill and compelled them to work, killing them without pity if they hung back. The temple was a fine one, they say, and looked well—with a chariot and four horses in baked clay on the roof—but the Romans always spoke of it with curses, a-thinking of the hundreds of brave lives the legend said it had cost in the building.

In a dark cell under this building were kept three bundles of palm-leaves; some with a few Greek verses written on them, others with a picture rudely painted: these were called the SIBYLLINE BOOKS. This was their story:

One day, as Tarquin sat in his palace, an old woman, very meanly dressed, went to him, and offered to sell him nine books. When the King heard the price she asked for them, he said they were too dear, and he wouldn't buy them.

Then the old woman hobbled away, burned three of the books, and returned to the palace and asked Tarquin would he buy the six that were left? He, when he heard that she asked as much for these six as for the nine, laughed at her, and bade her begone.

But after she had gone away he told the story to the augurs; and they, with very grave faces, said the King had done wrong. They said the old woman was a sibyl—which is a fine word for a witch

—and that Tarquin ought to have bought the books at any price. Of course the augurs had nothing to do with the old woman ; of course they didn't share profits with her. Not they.

But it happened—quite to the surprise of the augurs, of course—that just as they had convinced King Tarquin he ought to have bought the books, up comes the old woman once more ; this time with three books under her arm. For these three she asks as much as she had wanted for the nine. If the King wouldn't buy them, she would burn them too, and there was no saying what the consequences might be. But there was no fear of that. The augurs knew their trade too well. The three books were bought, and the old woman got the money.

These three books were highly prized by the Romans, and whenever any evil befell the city, such as a defeat in war, or a fatal pestilence, orders were given by the Senate to consult the Sibylline Books. The way it was done was this : one of the two men who had charge of the books opened the trap-door of the cell where they were kept, thrust in his hand, and drew up the topmost leaf. Then he read to the people what was written upon it, and translated it into Latin for their benefit. It was generally some moral sentence, which must have been a fine thing for the plague.

The story said that Tarquin was a warlike King, and fought his neighbors right valiantly. Some of these neighbors, who dwelt in the city of Gabii, gave him a great deal of trouble. Round the city there ran a strong wall (they say that some ruins of it are

still visible), and over this wall King Tarquin could not make his way. After thinking a while, he devised a cunning scheme to take the place.

One day, while the people of Gabii were watching over their wall, a single Roman ran toward them and begged them to let him in. When they had done so, he said his name was **SEXTUS**, and he was Tarquin's son, adding that he had fled from home to escape his father's cruelty. He showed them his back, which was marked by stripes, and besought them to let him fight in their army against his father. At first, they rather mistrusted him; but when he led a party of Gabines to the attack, and drove back a party of Romans, they began to believe in him. And when he made another sally and captured ever so much booty—Tarquin had left it in his way on purpose, you may be sure—they made up their minds that he was honest, and gave him the command of their army.

Then Sextus sent a trusty man to his father to ask him what was next to be done?

Old Tarquin was in his garden when the messenger arrived. He did not say a word in reply; but, walking to and fro among some beds of poppies, he struck off, with his stick, the heads of the tallest. Then he bade the messenger go back to his son and relate what he had seen.

Sextus understood what the story of the poppies meant. He very quietly got the chief men of Gabii into his power, and cut off their heads; then, when there was no one in the city strong enough to oppose him, he opened the gates and let the Romans in.

But, said the legend, the more conquests he made, the more wretched was King Tarquin. Like most bad men, he had horrible dreams, and fancied in his sleep that rams were butting him with their horns, and driving him down steep places, and that his guards wouldn't help him. Then, when he offered sacrifice, as usual, to the gods, a hideous snake crawled from under the altar and fastened its fangs in the meat intended for the gods. He had in his garden an eagle's nest: one day, when the old birds were away, a flock of vultures—unclean fowl—flew down, tossed the young eaglets out, and took up their abode in the eyrie.

When the poor frightened King told these things to the augurs they put on long faces, and said they were very bad signs indeed. The best thing to be done, they thought, was to send to Delphi and put a plain question or two to the oracle there.

These oracles were fortune-telling concerns got up by shrewd men, who knew more than the rest of mankind. The oracle itself was generally an old woman who sat on a three-legged stool in a very grand temple in a wood. People who wanted to consult the oracle paid their money at the door, then asked their question. The old woman then began to writhe and twist on her stool, and after a few moments of this exercise, gave an answer, which, nine times out of ten, meant nothing at all, or meant so many things that whatever happened it was sure to come true.

We have oracles nowadays, as you know—gipsies and other old women, who go about telling for-

tunes with greasy packs of cards, and pretending to describe to innocent young ladies the color of their sweethearts' hair and the shape of their noses. But it isn't by any means so good a trade as it used to be in the days of King Tarquin.

He—poor, guilty, conscience-stricken man—had no doubt of the truth of whatever the oracles said; and sent his two sons and his nephew BRUTUS to Delphi in all haste. When they got there, and had paid their money at the door, they asked,

“When will Tarquin fall?”

And the oracle answered,

“When a dog speaks with a human voice.”

Then said the three young men, who thought they might as well learn something about themselves as they were there, and had paid their money,

“Who will rule Rome after Tarquin?”

And the answer was,

“He who kisses his mother first.”

Upon this, says the story, the two sons of Tarquin started homeward as fast as they could go; but Brutus stumbling, fell to the ground, and so kissed his mother earth before them.

This Brutus—a nephew of King Tarquin's—passed for being an idiot. He was not so really; on the contrary, he had more than his share of sense and cunning, as you will see. But Tarquin had put his brother to death in order to grasp his wealth, and prevent his plotting against him. He would have done the same to Brutus if the latter had not pretended to be half-witted, lived on wild figs and honey, and talked nonsense. Seeing him so silly,

as he thought, Tarquin spared him, and even let him grow up with his own sons in his house.

It appears that the oracle meant him when it spoke of "the dog"—a crazy man being regarded by the Romans as little better than a dog. Thus Brutus won on both questions. Lest, however, you should suppose that, in this instance, the oracle spoke truth, the old story expressly says that before asking his questions Brutus—who was a shrewd dog, if a dog at all—handed the old woman on the stool a lump of gold hid in the inside of a piece of wood; and it was after she got this that she thought of the dog and the rest.

What Tarquin thought of the oracle the story does not tell us; very likely he groaned more piteously than ever because he could not make out what it meant.

He was at war as usual, besieging the strong town of Ardea, and had plenty of time during the long, weary siege to think over his crimes, and feel the sharp stings of remorse. How he must have tossed in his tent when those horrid nightmares hung over him in his sleep! And what work the augurs must have had watching the sacred chickens, to see if they could find some grain of comfort for their haggard King!

In a tent near his, at this siege of Ardea, says the old legend, his two sons, with their cousin COLLATINUS, spent their evenings in mirth and feasting. They laughed, and drank, and sang songs, and chatted to while away the time; and once they fell a talking of their wives who were away at home.

Each said his own wife was the most virtuous woman in the world, and tried to prove to the others that it was so. The dispute growing hot, they agreed to decide it by going home that very night, and seeing how their wives spent their time.

All three took horse at once, and rode and rode till they reached the gates of Rome. Then they dismounted and walked quietly to the house where lived the wives of Sextus and his brother. All was noise and merriment there: both the wives of Tarquin's sons were deep in joyous revels, with flowers on their heads, wine cups in their hands, and tipsy friends around them. Dark and angry were the faces of Sextus and his brother as they stalked away, took horse again, and rode and rode till they reached Collatia, where Collatinus's house was.

There was the beautiful LUCRETIA—Collatinus's wife—in the midst of her maids, spinning and working for her husband, a very sweet picture of domestic virtue.

Of course they agreed that Collatinus had won the wager, and he was very proud of his good and beautiful Lucretia. Little thought he how dear the victory was to cost him!

The young men rode back to the camp, and the next day Sextus—the same, you remember, who, the story says, betrayed the people of Gabii—rode stealthily away to Collatia once more. He begged Lucretia to let him rest himself there that night; she, as kind as she was beautiful, gave him a hearty welcome.

When all was still, at the dead of night, the

black-hearted villain went to her room, his drawn sword in his hand.

"Dare to resist me," he whispered fiercely, "and I will slay a slave, place him beside you, and say to Collatinus that I found you with him, and avenged his dishonor."

Lucretia yielded.

That dark and miserable night passed, and the morning came bright and happy for all but Lucretia. The villain Sextus had left her in the deepest despair, hardly knowing what she did. At last, when she had roused herself, she sat her down and wrote to her father and her husband to come quickly, as something dreadful had happened. Then she clad herself in mourning, and awaited their coming in tears which never ceased to flow.

They came quickly—LUCRETIVS, her father, with his friend VALERIUS; Collatinus, with Tarquin's nephew, Brutus—and the unhappy Lucretia, with downcast eye and burning cheek, told them her pitiful story.

"For me," said she, as she ended, "life is not worth keeping, now that I am bereft of mine honor. But ye, if ye have hearts of men, remember to avenge murdered Lucretia."

So saying, she drew a dagger from her bosom and stabbed herself to the heart.

Then it was—while the men and women around were standing aghast at so mournful a sight—that the idiot Brutus "spoke with the voice of a man."

"Be witness, ye gods!" he cried, "that I will avenge the chaste Lucretia; that from this moment

I am the foe unto death of the wicked Tarquin and his lustful house; and that this right hand shall take no rest till the tyrant is overthrown, and my country is free!"

Down, then, into the market-place he bore the dead body of the beautiful Lucretia, all dabbled with the red blood which trickled from the wound in her breast. And there, to the people shuddering at that horrid sight, he spoke in such fervid words of the shame and the cowardice of allowing wretches like the Tarquins to hold rule any longer in Rome, that with one voice all the people said they would have no more of them. Even the nobles were as fierce as the people; all together with one voice shouted that Rome had had enough of kings.

So they buried Lucretia; and all the soldiers of the army, and all the chief men of the city made a solemn compact that day that Rome should have no more kings, and that the people would try to govern themselves.

CHAPTER IX.

THE LEGEND OF BRUTUS.

WHEN King Tarquin—so runs the story—heard of the things that had been done at Rome, and of the rising among the people, he mounted his horse and rode straightway to the city. But the gates had been shut, and as he stood on the outside, it was told him that neither he nor any of his wicked house should be suffered to live at Rome from that day forth.

So he and his three sons and his wife Tullia—she had fled from the city at the first outbreak, no one caring to kill so vile a creature—journeyed to Cære, a city of Latium. His son Sextus, with the image of the murdered Lucretia haunting him perhaps, wandered about some time in search of a resting-place, till fate drove him to the very last spot in the world to which he should have gone. He went to Gabii, where the people well remembered his former treachery, and his cruel murder of their chief citizens. Right glad were they to get hold of him once more, and very quickly did they cut off his head as a warning to other traitors.

Tarquin had many friends at home still, and when he sent messengers to them, claiming what belonged to him in his old house, they told the messengers they would like to see the King back again, and said

they sighed for the old kingly times, and hated the republic in their hearts. Tarquin's messengers encouraging them, they met together and began to plot to set up King Tarquin once more.

But, as they were plotting, a slave listened and heard what they said, and ran straight and told the Consuls Brutus and Valerius of the danger that was at hand. Then Brutus commanded that all the conspirators should be seized and brought up before him to be punished for plotting against the republic.

It was so done, and the two first persons that were brought before the Consul were his own two sons. He was greatly angered and grieved at the sight, and the people said, one to another, "He dare not condemn his own children."

But when the plot was unraveled, and it was made to appear that the two young men were really guilty of plotting against the republic, Brutus made the axemen scourge them according to the law. And after they had been scourged, he commanded that they should be put to death.

It was before the eyes of the stern father, says the old story, that this cruel sentence was carried into effect. And the iron-willed man, who had no pity for his own children when they were proved to be the enemies of their country, sat in his chair with unmoved countenance while their heads were being struck off. They do say, however, that when he left the judgment-seat he was overcome by sorrow and anguish.

He had done his duty to his country as he understood it, but he had thenceforth nothing to live for;

and when Tarquin collected his friends from among the Etruscans, and marched with a great army against Rome, Brutus marched out to meet him with the Romans, quite ready to die. So, when the two armies met, one of the sons of King Tarquin rode furiously up, seeking the Roman chief to fight him; and Brutus, seeing him, rode out to meet him with spear and sword. The two charged, and at the first onset their spears crossed, and both were rolled dead on the ground.

Then the battle raged fiercely till the sun went down, and both armies returned to their camps, not knowing which side had won the victory. But that night, while all was silent, a shrill voice came out of a wood hard by, crying, "The Romans have slain one man more than the Etruscans!" which so frightened King Tarquin's friends, who believed it was a god's voice, that they took to their heels the first thing next morning, and ran home.

CHAPTER X.

THE LEGEND OF LARS PORSENNA.

KING TARQUIN wandered away to another city of Etruria, called Clusium, where dwelt a brave and warlike chief named LARS PORSENNA. To him Tarquin told his pitiful story, and begged him to help him back to his throne.

There was nothing in the world bold Lars Porsenna would have liked better. He swore a great oath that Tarquin should yet reign in Rome, and sent his heralds north and south, and east and west, to gather his fighting men together. When all his army was ready, he marched forth at the head of such a vast swarm of warriors that, long before they came in sight, the clouds of dust which they raised warned the Romans of their coming. Town and village he overran on his way like a great flood, sweeping every thing before him, till he reached the bank of the Tiber over against the city of Rome.

In all past time it had never known so dreadful a day as that. For two days, horseman after horseman had come riding in from the country, covered with foam and mire, to say that Lars Porsenna was coming, was coming, was coming! The rich had tried to hide their money and their treasure, and long strings of carts still rattled over the road to

the south, bearing away the wives and children of the Roman soldiers.

Then said the Consul, "We must hew down the bridge to prevent their getting into the city." And they began with axe and crowbar to hack and break the bridge.

But the clouds of dust came nearer, nearer, nearer, and the Romans could soon see the Etruscan captains glittering in their bright armor and riding in front of their men. Said the Consul, "They will be upon us before we can cut down the bridge."

Up then started stout HORATIUS COCLES, and cried, "Give me two brave men with me, and I will keep the bridge and stop the enemy till the whole is hewn down."

SPURIUS LARTIUS shouted, "I will be one!" and TITUS HERMINIUS said he would be the other. So these three went out alone to meet Lars Porsenna and his army, and to keep the farther end of the bridge.

When the Etruscans saw them standing, three against so many thousand, they laughed loudly, and three out of their host went to do battle with them. They were stout soldiers, but Horatius and his two comrades were better than they, and soon overcame them. Then came three more, but they too fell by the hands of the Romans; then three more, and they were killed likewise.

Lars Porsenna sat on his horse, and wondered at the bravery and strength of those three champions. "Who will make me an end of those three Romans?" he cried. And a host of Etruscans ran forward to do as their chief had bidden.

Just at that moment the bridge began to tremble and crack. "Come back! come back!" shouted the Romans from the other side; and back ran Spurius Lartius and Titus Herminius. Horatius stood still. On came the Etruscans, showering their darts at him. In a few minutes more they would be upon him; but as they came, the heavy bridge groaned and cracked, then fell with a thundering crash into the river.

Horatius watched it fall. Then turning his eyes toward Rome, where he could see his own house, he prayed, "Father Tiber! receive these arms, and me who bear them, and let thy waters befriend and save me this day!" So saying, he plunged into the stream, clad in heavy armor as he was.

The Romans gazed in pity, little dreaming that one so heavily laden with breast-plate and sword could float. But, as the poets say, Father Tiber heard his prayer, and bore up the brave Roman's chin. He swam across, while the Etruscan darts were dipping into the water all round his head, and landed safely on the other side.

Loud was the shout the Romans set up when he stood once more among them. Long did they honor his name as the defender of the bridge and the saviour of the city; and afterward—in happier times, when Rome was at peace—they had a statue of him cast in his armor of mail, and set up in a public place, with the whole story of his gallant deed written beneath, so that all men should remember the name of Horatius Cocles.

But still Lars Porsenna lay encamped opposite

the city, and the Romans knew that in the end—as they were so much weaker than the Etruscans—he must conquer them. Their danger was so pressing, and their dread of having King Tarquin back again so great, that one of them—a young man named CAIUS MUTIUS—was impelled to commit a most shocking deed in the hope of saving his country. He crossed the river at night, stole into the Etruscan camp, and groped his way to the tent of Lars Porsenna. There he saw several men together; one of whom—a man of fine carriage and gorgeous dress—he stabbed to the heart, believing him to be Porsenna himself. It was, however, only a secretary of his.

The murderer was forthwith arrested and brought before Porsenna. When the latter began to question him, Mutius would not speak: whereupon the guards threatened to put him to the torture. At this Mutius, seeing a fire kindled near by, thrust his right hand into the flames and held it there till it was burned off to the wrist. Then turning to Porsenna, “You see,” said he, “how little I fear pain. There are in Rome three hundred bold men who have sworn to do the deed which I have vainly attempted.”

Upon which, says the story, Porsenna was so much struck with the fortitude of Mutius that he pardoned him, and let him go. The Romans thought a great deal of Mutius, and there were many pretty songs and ballads about him. For my own part, I confess I see very little difference between him and any common murderer.

There was a man, you remember, in times not very distant from ours, who held his right hand in

the flames till it dropped off, and spoke never a word during the pain but this: "Unworthy right hand!" This was THOMAS CRANMER, who was burned at the stake because he was a Protestant, in the reign of Bloody Queen Mary, in England; who had been badgered and bullied by priests while in prison, until he signed a paper denying his belief, through weakness; and who, when his manhood returned, recalled what he had written, and died nobly, holding the hand that had signed the paper in the flames till it blazed and burned away, and crying, "Unworthy right hand!" There is a good deal of difference between this sort of heroism and that of the murderer Mutius the Left-handed.

However, when Porsenna thought of the three hundred Romans who, as Mutius said, had sworn to murder him, he began to grow tired of helping Tarquin. He sent word to the Romans that he would return home and not trouble them more, provided they gave him twenty hostages, ten youths and ten maidens, as a pledge that they would not war upon him. The Romans were delighted to get rid of so powerful an enemy. They sent the hostages, ten youths and ten maidens of the chief families, and Lars Porsenna made ready to march home.

But as his army passed along the bank of the Tiber, the maidens who were with him as hostages saw the homes of their fathers and their friends glistening in the sunlight in distant Rome. They thought of the strange land to which they were going, and as their hearts were ready to burst, one of them, named CLÆLIA, sprang up and ran toward

the Tiber. The others followed, and all together leaped into the river, swam across, and returned to Rome.

The stern old Romans were not at all rejoiced to see them back again. They said their faith was plighted to Porsenna, and they bade the weeping girls return forthwith whence they had come. Porsenna, however, who seems to have been an excellent sort of person, would not keep them when they were brought back to his camp, but sent them home once more, and granted to Clœlia the right of taking with her whomsoever she chose out of the youths who were hostages.

After this, Lars Porsenna marched away to his own home, and he and the Romans grew close friends.

CHAPTER XI.

THE LAY OF THE LAKE REGILLUS.

BUT old King Tarquin never lost hope. When his first Etruscan friends deserted him, he turned to Lars Porsenna; now that Porsenna left him, he journeyed to Tusculum, and told his sorrowful story there. When the King of the Tusculans heard it—he was a son-in-law of King Tarquin's—he swore by his gods that Tarquin should yet reign in Rome. And he sent messengers to the thirty cities of Latium, bidding them muster their bravest men, that they might go up with him and fight for old King Tarquin. So the thirty cities, being jealous of Rome, gathered their warriors together, and gave them to OCTAVIUS MAMILIUS, King of Tusculum, that he might overwhelm the Romans.

When the news of this great gathering came to Rome, there was as much dismay in the city as there had been in the days of Lars Porsenna. "How shall we stand against so many?" said the Romans one to another. Then said one of them, "We must have one leader instead of two, that what we do may be done with the more vigor." So, Publius Valerius being dead, the people chose AULUS POSTUMIUS to lead them; and as he was alone they called him not Consul but DICTATOR—and this, the Romans said, was the way they came to have Dictators.

Tarquin and his Latin friends, the bravest from the thirty cities, were marching on apace. Forth did brave Aulus lead the Romans to meet them; and before the fight they agreed, as the Romans and Latins had once been friends, and many young Romans had taken Latin wives, and many Latins had married fair Roman girls, that every Roman woman who chose to leave her Latin husband and go back to Rome, and every Latin woman who chose to leave her Roman husband and return to her native Latin city, should go in peace. Whereupon, say the old Roman poets, all the Roman wives of Latins returned home to Rome, but only two Latin women were found, out of the many who had wedded Romans, willing to leave their husbands for the sake of their country.

The battle began near the Lake Regillus. At the very first old King Tarquin, with his white hairs blowing about in the wind, spurred his horse forward and charged the Roman leader Aulus; but before he could come up with him, some Roman struck the old man down, and he was carried away out of the battle. But his sons with their friends, who were called the Tarquini, fell like a storm on the Romans, scattering them far and wide. Their horses snorted and pranced over the dead and the dying, and no man stood there that day who could resist the shock of their terrible onset.

Quoth Aulus, "If the gods be not for us, it shall fare ill with Rome this day."

Just then he saw two fair and tall young men mounted on horses as white as snow, riding in front

of the battle. "Who be these?" cried he. But they answered not a word, but rode furiously at the Latin host, riding down and slaying all that were before them. The Romans took courage at the sight, and Titus Herminius—the same who had stood with brave Horatius at the bridge—fell upon the Tusculan king and ran his spear right through his body. A loud shout arose from the Romans, and a deep groan from the Latins when the great Mamilius fell; and the two fair youths on the snow-white steeds plied their strong broadswords more fiercely than before, and the Latins lay in huge heaps on the field. Then Aulus bade the Romans charge once more; and they charged so hotly that on all sides the Latin soldiers fled, and the bravest of the thirty cities poured out their blood upon the plain.

When evening came the battle was over, and the Romans had won the day.

Far away in the city of Rome the old men and the maidens and the young boys sat wondering how it had fared with Aulus and his brave men; and as they wondered, two fair young men, mounted on snow-white steeds, rode through the Forum, and washed their horses' legs, which were stained with blood, at a little stream which trickled down to the Tiber. Then some one asked these strangers, "What cheer?" And they told them how that a great battle had been fought, and that the Romans had won the victory.

There was great rejoicing at Rome at this glorious news, and when Aulus and the soldiers came

home there was no end to the feasting and the cheering and the singing for joy. But when the old men and the maidens told how the two youths on snow-white steeds had first brought them the news, Aulus knew that they were the same who had fought so bravely in the battle, and he commanded that they should be brought before him to receive some reward. But they were nowhere to be found; nor was any trace of them or of their snow-white steeds to be seen. Then Aulus knew that they were the divine brothers Castor and Pollux, and he raised a temple in their honor.



CASTOR AND POLLUX.

After this last defeat old Tarquin went away with a broken heart. He had lost his son in the fight, and there was no one left now to take his part and do battle with the Romans. He journeyed to a city of the Greeks, and there he died. So there was an end of him and of his house, and of the struggles of the Romans to prevent their old King getting back again.

CHAPTER XII.

THE STORY OF THE TRIBUNES OF THE PEOPLE.

AS the Tribunes of the People were very important officers, the Romans had a long story to account for their creation.

According to the old legends, when the republic was first established the nobles insisted on keeping all the offices for themselves. They said, for instance, that the two Consuls must both be nobles, and that it was quite ridiculous for a common man to think of being Consul.

The people did not mind this so much as other matters which touched them more closely. By some means or other the nobles had got into their hands all the riches that were in Rome; and when work was scarce, or the harvests bad, or the farmers taken away from their farms to fight in the wars, there was nothing for the poor people but to go to the nobles and borrow.

To strengthen themselves and keep the people down, the nobles made a variety of laws concerning debts, which were most oppressive and cruel. When a noble wanted to persecute a debtor he called upon him to pay what he owed. If he could not—as was usually the case—he had the choice of selling himself and his children into slavery, or of answering with his body for the debt. If he chose the latter,

he had thirty days to find the money. If he had not found it by the end of this time, he was handed over to his creditor, chained with a heavy iron chain. The creditor gave him just enough food to keep him alive, and kept him chained in his yard sixty days. If, at the end of this time, he was still unable to pay, he was judged to be incorrigible, and the creditor might either kill him or sell him into slavery. If there were several creditors, each had the right to cut a piece from his living body.

The legend said that the Romans submitted to this shocking law for fifteen years; but, at last, they could bear it no longer, and they rose. Being a quiet, harmless people, they did not seek to revenge themselves on their oppressors, but quietly packed up their little property, and leading their wives and children by the hand, trudged out of the city to find a new home. Just outside the old city stood Mount Aventine: to it they flocked, and settled down, in the fine summer weather, on the side and the top of the mountain.

When they were gone, quoth the legend, the nobles began to be alarmed, and sent them word to come back directly. But they answered—No, they would stay where they were.

This did not suit the nobles at all, as the people had been very useful to them—fighting their battles, digging their fields, building their houses, and so on—so they took counsel together, and resolving to yield something to the people for the sake of getting them back, they sent to Mount Aventine, as their messenger, **MENENIUS AGRIPPA**.

Menenius made his speech to the people, and then the leader of the people made his, and then Menenius made another, at the end of which speeches the people and the nobles were farther from agreeing than ever. Then Menenius said he would tell the people a story or parable, and they said they would hear that too.

So Menenius began by saying that once upon a time the head, hands, feet, eyes, and mouth, rebelled against the stomach. They complained that the stomach was an idle, good-for-nothing creature, which lay still at its ease while they were working, and they declared that they would support it no longer. The hands said they would carry no more; the eyes, that they would see no more; the legs, that they would walk no more, to serve so lazy a creature. As they said, so they did; and, for a time, all went well with them. But very soon, one by one, they began to languish and grow weak: the eyes grew dim, the legs tottered, the hands could no longer grasp any thing; and so they discovered, when it was too late, that the stomach was really the source of their own strength, and that in injuring it they had been destroying themselves.

Then, says the legend, the people, perceiving how uncommonly like the stomach in the fable the Roman nobles were, cried, with one voice, that Menenius Agrippa had spoken well, and they would go back to Rome. So they went back, and the nobles—who, perhaps, were astonished that the fable had answered so well—forgave every man his debts, and allowed the people to choose officers to protect them,

who were to be called TRIBUNES. This was the way the Romans accounted for their having Tribunes.

Ever after that time, the spot on Mount Aventine where they rested was holy ground. Poor Romans long afterward used to lead their children up the mountain on holidays, and delighted to tell them the old story about the times when their forefathers took refuge there from the oppression of the nobility, and were brought back by Menenius Agrippa.

But the quarrels were not over yet by any means. Though the Tribunes had been created for the purpose of protecting the people, and for nothing else, still the nobles insisted on their being chosen from the nobility and not from the people. Year after year the people murmured, and said that noble Tribunes were of no use to them—that they wanted Tribunes chosen from among themselves. But the nobles being firm and united, and the people poor and ignorant, for many years this clamor led to nothing, and the nobles made their own friends Tribunes, who gave the people no protection at all.

After a time, however, one of the Tribunes chosen, whose name was VOLERO, took the people's part strongly, and said, loudly enough for all the nobles to hear, that if the people did what was right they would have their own Tribunes, whether the nobles liked it or no. It was very curious that one or two men who had said the same thing as Volero had died suddenly, no one knew how. Volero knew this, and when he went out he was always backed by a body of sturdy workmen. When the nobles met him and jostled him, or insulted him, these workmen

gathered round him, with sticks and stones, and if the nobles did not go home, there were broken heads.

However, Volero did not alter the law. After him there was chosen another bold Tribune, named LÆTORIUS; and he demanded, as before, that the Tribunes should be chosen from the people. Consul APPIUS CLAUDIUS, a haughty noble, sneered at Lætorius, and mocked him. Said Lætorius, "We shall pass the law to-morrow, or there will be blood spilled in the Forum."

Said Appius, "We shall see to that."

Early next morning Appius Claudius and the nobles went down into the Forum with a crowd of slaves and hangers-on: and to the same place went Lætorius at the head of a great concourse of people. Now the law was, that when the people began to vote in their assemblies the nobles should keep away; so when the voting began, Lætorius sent word to the nobles that he would be much obliged if they would leave the Forum.

Appius made answer that the nobles would stay there if they pleased.

Then some one flung a stone, and some one else flourished a stick, and a street fight began. The nobles, with their hangers-on, made a rush at Lætorius and knocked him down; but the people charged in their turn, picked him up, and carried him off bleeding. Their blood being up, they would not go this time to the Aventine; they marched straight up to the Capitol, took possession of the fort there, and barred the gates.

The nobles were surprised at first; then, making

sure that the people would soon come to terms, they went home each to his house, laughing and joking about the affair. But the next day came, and the next, and the next, and no word of yielding came from the people. Then the nobles began to think it was no laughing matter, and sent to the people in the Capitol to inquire when they would come out and be friends again.

Lætorius said they would not leave that place till the nobles agreed that the Tribunes should all be chosen from the people.

The nobles were greatly disgusted at this, and there was some talk of storming the place. But when a wise old noble, named QUINTIUS, showed his friends how they would surely be beaten if it came to open war, they yielded, and agreed that the people should choose their own Tribunes from that time forth. Then the people came down from the Capitol and went every man to his own house.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE STORY OF SPURIUS CASSIUS AND THE HOMESTEAD LAW.

THE next quarrel, says the old story, was about land. It seems that in these wars which the Romans were always waging with their neighbors they conquered a great deal of land. From time immemorial the nobles, who commanded the armies and managed the government, had been in the habit of keeping this land for themselves. Now the people said that if the nobles would let each man have a little farm out of this land, there would be no more poverty, and the people would not need to borrow.

But the nobles answered that they would do no such thing.

It happened, however, that one of the Consuls at that time was a very honest, kind-hearted man. His name was SPURIUS CASSIUS. He said that the people were quite right; that the nobles had more land than they could farm; and he went to the assembly of the people and proposed that out of the unoccupied public lands each man in Rome should have a homestead of four acres and a half.

It was a bad business for him. For the nobles in the Senate would not say No to the bill openly; but after agreeing to it, they would not allow it to be carried out, and very soon afterward somebody

accused Spurius Cassius of treason. He was found guilty by the nobles, and sentenced to be beheaded; which cruel sentence was actually carried into effect, according to the story, as a warning to all Romans not to quarrel with the nobles.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE LEGEND OF CORIOLANUS.

ABOUT these times lived a noble whose name was CAIUS MARCIUS. He was a soldier, like all the Romans, and fought at the old battle by Lake Regillus, when he was only a boy. His father had died when he was an infant; but his mother, VOLUMNIA, was a woman of strong mind and great heart, and taught him to be fearless and bold.

In one of the Roman wars siege was laid to a strong city named Corioli. While the Romans lay before it, the people of the city sallied forth of a sudden, and fell on the Romans with such fury that they turned to run. Young Caius Marcius, boiling with rage at the sight, shouted that all who were men would face the enemy with him; and most of the soldiers, roused by his words, turned again and fought stoutly by his side. It was then the turn of the men of Corioli to fly. They ran back to the city, hotly chased by the Romans. As they entered the gate, Caius Marcius and one or two others rushed in with them, and held the gate open till the whole Roman army passed through, and the city was taken.

To honor Caius Marcius for this brave deed the Consul ordered that, from that time forth, he should bear the name of CORIOLANUS.

When he returned from the wars the people were glad to see him, and feasted him, and paid him great honors; but he scorned them, calling them low-born knaves, who were not fit to speak to the nobles. More than this, he said that they ought not to have Tribunes to protect them, and that if he had his will the Tribunes would soon be done away with. This was not the way to make the people like him, as you may imagine; and in a short time they hated him as much as they had honored him before.

It fell out that a great famine overtook the city of Rome, and the people were in sore distress for want of food. They might have died of hunger, but for the King of the Greeks who were in Sicily. He heard of their suffering, and sent ships to Rome laden with corn to feed them. But when the ships arrived, the nobles got hold of the corn; and when the people asked for some of it to feed their starving wives and little ones, Coriolanus answered, "No, they should have none until they gave up their Tribunes, and promised to leave all the power to the nobles."

At this there arose a mighty tumult in the city, so fierce that the nobles were forced to give corn to the people to save their own necks. Then said the Tribunes, "We must try this Coriolanus, and find out whether or no he has been guilty of treason against the people in refusing to give them corn."

Coriolanus knew very well that he was guilty, and, with very little of the courage he had formerly shown in the old wars, ran away from the city in order to escape a trial. They say that as he left

the gates of Rome this proud man turned round and cursed the place and the people, and hoped they would one day feel what it was to have lost so great a warrior as himself.

He journeyed away to a city of the Volscians, who were enemies of Rome; and when he found the King of the Volscians, whose name was **ATTIUS**, he told him that he had left Rome forever, and that he would like nothing so much as to make war upon his old friends.

The old story does not say that Attius shrank from the traitor, though no doubt he did; but as Coriolanus was a great soldier, he answered that he was very glad to see him, and they would see what could be done against the Romans. Then he went to his people, and asked them, "Would they march down and fight the Romans?" But they answered, "No, we have had enough fighting for the present."

Attius then contrived a cunning trick to persuade them to make war.

When the time for the fair at Rome came round, Attius went there with a great number of his people to see the games. After the sport had begun this wily King said secretly to the Roman Consuls, "There are a great many of my people here: have a care lest they quarrel with your folks, and trouble arise. Perhaps it would be better to find some excuse to send them away." After he had given them this hint, he slipped privately out of the city and hid himself on the wayside, a few miles from Rome.

The Consuls thought over what he said, and judged that it was best to send away the Volscians.

So they made a decree ordering every Volscian to leave the city before sunset that day. Accordingly, while the sun was still seen over the tops of the hills, all the Volscians who had come to see the games walked out of Rome, and began to journey homeward.

When they came to the place where Attius was, he pretended to be surprised to see them, and cried, "What! are the games over already?"

The Volscians said they believed not; but that the Consuls had ordered them to leave.

Then Attius pretended to fly into a great rage, and swore that the Volscians were disgraced in the eyes of all the nations that were gathered together to see the games, and asked them if they were thieves or outcasts, that they should be driven out of Rome.

The Volscians were maddened by his words, and with one voice called on their King to lead them against Rome, in order that they might be revenged upon the city for the insult that had been put upon them there.

So Attius succeeded in his trick, and he and the Volscians, with the traitor Coriolanus to help them, marched down against the Romans. They were so many and so strong, now that Coriolanus fought on their side, that they took city after city from the Romans, and laid waste the whole country with fire and sword. Very soon they pitched their camp over against the city of Rome itself, and prepared to attack it.

The Romans, it seems, from some reason or other,

happened to have 'very little courage at the time, and instead of turning out like men and fighting a good fight for their homes, bethought themselves of sending messages to the traitor Coriolanus, begging him to turn away and spare them. So they sent five of the chief nobles to him, and they besought him not to harm his native city.

But Coriolanus—like Benedict Arnold, when he led the British troops against Connecticut—said that it was because Rome was his native city that he intended to lay it low, and bade the five nobles begone.

They returned with heavy hearts to Rome, and the people read in their faces the bad news they brought. They resolved to try another message, and other nobles went forth to the Volscian camp; but the traitor Coriolanus would not even see them.

When they returned to the city, the people were indeed in sore dismay. The Volscians were even then making ready for the attack, and the Romans seemed to have made up their minds that there was no use in fighting. In the midst of their despair, a woman named VALERIA remembered how dearly Coriolanus had formerly loved his mother Volumnia, and she bethought herself that perhaps he might yet listen to her.

So Volumnia, and Valeria, and Coriolanus's wife, VIRGILIA, and his little children—for the fellow had deserted his family as well as his country—and a great concourse of the chief matrons of Rome, went out from the city and traveled to the Volscian camp. Coriolanus was there sitting before the general's tent,

and a host of Volscian officers stood around him. When he saw the crowd coming with the Roman matrons in the front, all clad in the deepest mourning, he asked who were these women, and what came they to do? And they told him it was his mother, Volumnia.

Then he arose from his seat and ran to his mother, and tried to kiss her. But the noble Roman matron stopped him, and said that if he was her son he could not be the foe of Rome: if not, why did he pretend to love her?

Not a word did Coriolanus say; and indeed there was nothing to be said in his defense.

So Volumnia went on, and implored him to save her from the disgrace of having borne a son who became the ruin of his country. Many more things she said, this noble woman, all tending to show how basely and vilely her son had acted; while he, smitten with shame and remorse, stood still and hung his head, and answered never a word.

At last he looked up, and saying, "Mother, thou hast saved Rome but lost thy son!" gave orders to his soldiers to strike their tents and march away. Thus he betrayed the Volscians—who had begun the war believing that he would be true to them—just as formerly he had betrayed his own countrymen the Romans.

One story says that Coriolanus was killed by the Volscians; another, that he cut his own throat; and another, that he died of old age, bitterly repenting his past life. I think the last is the end I should have liked best, if I had invented his story.

CHAPTER XV.

THE LAY OF THE FABII.

THE quarrels between the nobles and the people still went on, and the people were in great poverty. They said to each other, as they starved in their scanty homes, "Would to God the nobles would carry out the wise law of good Spurius Cassius, and give each of us a homestead out of the public land which lies idle yonder; then we should not need go a-hungred, or see our little ones die of want!"

But when some of them went to the nobles and said, "What about the law of Spurius Cassius?" the nobles turned their backs on them, and said that law couldn't be thought of on any account.

Then said some shrewd men among the people, "Let us refuse to go a-warring for the nobles: we'll warrant, when they find they have no soldiers to fight their battles, they will think differently about the homestead law."

The people agreed to this sensible plan. But when the Senate declared war upon one of the neighbors of Rome, and the Consuls made speeches to the people about the glory and honor of Rome, and asked them whether they were afraid of their neighbors, and had they lost their ancient valor? the poor people, quite excited and blinded, buckled on their swords and marched out to meet the enemy.

It is pleasant to think that nations nowadays are far too wise to be tricked by such pompous talk about war and glory. Oh, far!

After a time, when the people came to reflect, they saw what a mistake they had made, and said bluntly and plainly that they would go home. This the Consul Appius would not permit. Then the people said, "Very well, he might keep them there if he chose, but he wouldn't make them fight unless they had a mind." So, when they met the enemy, instead of fighting, one and all, they ran away.

On this the Consul Appius, who was a stern, determined man, got a number of soldiers from a neighboring city, and, with their help, seized the soldiers who had run away, and put every tenth man to death. After this the hatred between the nobles and the people grew fiercer than ever.

One of the most famous of the legends to which it gave rise was about the FABII.

They were a great house at Rome, all nobles; but in all these quarrels they took the people's side. They said openly that the nobles had no right to oppress the people; and whenever the people's wrongs were discussed in the Senate, then the voice of a Fabius was sure to be loudly raised on their behalf. They were not mere talkers either. When a great battle had been fought, and ever so many Romans wounded, the Fabii had the poor fellows carried into their houses, and shamed many other nobles into doing the like.

In this way the Fabii became great favorites among the people, and were, as a matter of course,

hated by the nobles. They were so great a family that, for a long time, the nobles dared not meddle with them to injure them. But when KÆSO FABIVS was made Consul, and declared boldly that he was for dividing the public land as the people wanted, the nobles burst into open revolt. They had so much power, and could do so much mischief, that Kæso found he could not make head against them; and he and all his house resolved to leave the city of their own accord.

Rome was at that time at war with Veii, a strong city ten miles off. Kæso Fabius went to the Senate, and said: "We of the Fabian house will take upon ourselves to fight the people of Veii. We want neither arms, nor men, nor money from Rome. We will overcome Rome's enemy ourselves, at our own cost, for the honor of our name."

The nobles were delighted to get rid of them, and said that it was all right. Then Kæso Fabius collected all the men of his house on the Quirinal Hill—three hundred and ten in all—and after they had been blessed by the priests, and the augurs had paid a visit to the hen-coops for their benefit, they marched out of Rome, girt and equipped for war, and settled themselves by the river Crimera. When the men of Veii next marched down, the Fabii rose up to meet them, and defeated them with great slaughter. And after one or two lessons of this kind, the Veientians found Veii quite a pleasant residence, and staid there a good deal more than they had been used to do.

But there was a certain day every year, when the

custom was among the Fabii that they should sacrifice to their gods on their old home—the Quirinal Hill. Every year, when that day came round, all the men of the house went from their new home to the old spot, leaving their arms behind them, as it was not the custom to go armed to offer sacrifice.

This habit of theirs came to the ears of the people of Veii, and they laid a plot to be revenged on their dreaded enemies. On the road through which the Fabii would pass on their way to Rome a vast number of Veientians hid themselves; and the moment the Fabii appeared they fell upon them with great fury. The men of Veii had arms, and the Fabii had none, so it was more like a butchery than a fight; and out of the whole three hundred and ten, only one, a boy, escaped alive. Thus the nobles were avenged, and for a few years Veii was spared.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LEGEND OF CINCINNATUS.

ALL the old legends say that, at this time, the distress of the people of Rome was such that nothing was ever seen like it. The plague broke out among them, and carried off whole streets full at a time. Famine pressed heavily on them; and to add to all, the nobles trampled them more cruelly, more brutally than ever: robbing them of the little they had, carrying off their wives and daughters, and beating them soundly if they ventured to complain.

The young nobles were the worst. One spirited young fellow named **KÆSO QUINTIUS** had committed so many shameful acts—insulting poor men's wives, falling with sword and stick upon the poor men when they complained, and laughing at all law and justice—that at last the Tribunes of the People were forced to bring him to trial. They would have done so long before, but that Kæso's family was very powerful, his father, **QUINTIUS CINCINNATUS**, or **THE CURLY-HEAD**, being one of the chief leaders of the nobles. When Kæso was tried, a great many witnesses came forward to swear against him; and seeing that there was no chance of escape, he ran away from the city and hid himself.

However, according to the legend, his father re-

solved to avenge him, and this is the way he contrived it.

The Romans were at war with a rough mountain tribe called *Æquians*. The story says that the war was caused by the plundering of some Roman farms by the *Æquians*; and that when the Romans sent to the *Æquians* to demand redress, the *Æquian* chief, a proud man named *CLÆLIUS*, said roughly, that he had not time to listen to them; that they might, if they chose, tell their story to yonder oak. Whereupon the Roman messengers did tell their story to the oak, and took it and all the other trees around to witness that there would be blood spilled, and orphans made, for that rude speech of the chief *Clælius*.

So the war began. The Romans won the first battles; but very soon, being rash and imprudent, they got caught in a mountain pass by the *Æquians*, and could neither go forward nor return backward the way they came. Seven men only contrived to escape and bear the news to Rome.

This was the chance old *Quintius* the Curly-head had been waiting for. As he was a very skillful politician, he soon managed to get the Senate to bid the Consul appoint him Dictator.

However, he pretended he had no hand in the business, and feigned to be very much surprised when the messengers of the Senate sent him word that he had been appointed. One of the legends even mentions that he made quite a touching speech to his wife about leaving their little field unsown that year; but as the other stories do not make him

out to be quite such a modest, retiring character, we will say no more about that.

When he took office he bade every man shut up his house, gird on his sword, and march to the relief of the army. So vigorously was the work done, that before the Æquians knew that any men had escaped out of the pass the new army marched up and gave a great shout, to let the people inside the pass know there was help come. Then the fight began; and the Æquians, being attacked on both sides by the Romans, within and without the pass, very soon cried "Enough!" and were glad to make peace by giving up their cloaks and their arms, and marching, one by one, under a yoke made of three spears, as an acknowledgment of their defeat.

Then Cincinnatus marched back to Rome in high feather; and being greatly applauded for his victory, and allowed to have a public triumph, he quietly took the opportunity of driving into exile the Tribune who had accused his wicked son Kæso. Then he laid down his power and went back to his farm.

A long while afterward he turned up again. A famine breaking out at Rome, says the story, the people were plunged into great distress, and starved to death in great numbers. There were no charitable societies then, such as we have now—for charity was not considered so great a virtue among the Romans as it is by the Christians—so there is nothing impossible in this part of the story.

But there lived at Rome a man named MÆLIUS, who was not a noble, yet, strange to say, was very

rich. This Mælius saw no better way of spending his money than buying ship-loads of corn in foreign countries—in Sicily and Africa, for instance—and giving it away when it was landed at Rome. He gave freely to all: it was only necessary to be hungry to share his bounty.

For this, and out of the grateful fullness of their hearts, the poor people of Rome loved Mælius, and showed their love, as their custom was, by following him in the street, and hanging round his house; so that he came at last to have a larger throng of followers than the richest of the nobles. This vexed the envious nobles to that degree that they began to plot against Mælius. Said Quintius their leader: “There is no one who can rid us of him so well as old Cincinnatus.” And all the others being of this mind, they bade the Consul appoint Cincinnatus Dictator once more.

He was eighty years old at the time, says the story, and if he had been as fond of his farm as some of the legends pretend he would have staid there now; but he did not make the least objection when the Senate sent for him, but girt up his toga and went straight to the Capitol.

Next morning he marched down to the Forum with four-and-twenty axemen, and a great concourse of nobles and hangers-on. To Mælius he sent word by AHALA—his master of the horse, or aid-de-camp as we should say—to appear before him directly.

When Mælius saw Ahala coming at the head of a crowd of nobles, he knew very well what it meant.

Seizing a knife from a butcher's stall, he ran into the crowd and called upon his friends to stand by him. But Ahala dashed after him with his men, came up with him, and struck him dead with his sword.

The story adds that the people were at first greatly enraged at the deed; but that Cincinnatus quieted them by saying that Mælius had wanted to make himself king, and had died the death of a traitor.

This is the last of the stories about Cincinnatus. Though we know very little more about him than we do about King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, he is a very famous character in history; and he is often mentioned as a virtuous patriot and a man of rigid honesty. Judging him by the stories which have come down to us, I am not very much affected by his virtues: he was true to his party, ambitious, revengeful, and unscrupulous—if more than this, I have not found it out.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE STORY OF THE TEN MEN AND SICCIUS DENTATUS.

THE next story says that the misery of the people growing too great to bear, and many in their deep sorrow fancying they saw strange signs in the heavens—the gods fighting in the clouds, and a rain of flesh descending upon the earth—the people decided there must be something very wrong in their government, and said to the nobles that it must positively be changed.

Then said the nobles, “Suppose we send over to Greece and get some Greek laws from thence, to see if they will answer better than our own; and suppose, also, we choose no more Consuls, but put the government in the hands of Ten Men—men of standing and virtue.”

The people answered, they had no objection to any change. So ships were fitted out and sent to Greece for the laws, and Ten Men were chosen—all nobles—to manage the government.

The ships came back laden with laws, which were engraven on brass in order that they should last forever; and the Ten Men—who were kept very busy for a year or more studying the new laws, and altering them to suit the Romans—had so little time to attend to the people that every one said

they were excellent rulers—a great improvement on the old Consuls.

So, when their term of office expired, the people all said they would adhere to the new plan, and elected Ten Men again, one of whom was APPIUS CLAUDIUS.

By this time the business of altering the laws was over, and the Ten Men turned their attention to the people. They ruled, says the story, more cruelly than any of the old Consuls. With all their sad experience the poor people of Rome had never known a more dreadful time.

One day, as the people were talking in the Forum about the old subject of the division of the public land, an old soldier came forward and begged to be allowed to say a few words. His name was SICCUS DENTATUS, and he was known to be one of the bravest and best soldiers in the army.

This old hero reminded the people that he had fought for the republic now forty years, and that he had been present in all the battles of the Romans during that period. He told them of the honors that had been paid to him on account of his victories, and counted up the names of the soldiers and citizens whose lives he had saved in battle. Then he bared his breast and showed the scars of forty-five wounds he had received, all in front, and not one behind. "And yet," said this stout old soldier, "here am I without any means of living, or a single acre of the land that has been bought with my blood!"

The people cried with one voice that it was a

shame that so brave an old man should starve. But the nobles only laughed at his complaints.

When Appius was chosen to be one of the Ten Men, the Roman army was beaten in their wars against the Volscians. Appius said the cause was the cowardice of the soldiers; but old Siccus Dentatus went about crying aloud that this was not true—that the real cause of the defeat was the folly of the generals and the bad management of the Ten Men. And he was so well known, and so much thought of, that most of the people believed him.

On this, the Ten Men resolved to get rid of him. They appointed him to bear a message to the general of the army, and bade him set out from Rome at a certain hour with a small band of men whom they gave him. The old soldier obeyed, and started with the men at the hour fixed.

They marched quickly forward for some time, till they were in a hollow between several hills, a long way from any houses. Then one of the men made a signal, and all the others drew their swords and fell upon the old soldier. He was at first stunned by the attack; but soon recovering himself, he set his back against a high rock, and began to defend himself desperately. The nearest of the murderers soon rolled in the dust; the others ran to a distance, and threw darts at Siccus. But he was used to handle his shield, and every dart that flew toward him he received on it; and whenever any one of the assassins came within reach he cut him down. Fifteen of them, the story says, he had killed, besides a great number wounded, when two or three of the coward-

ly wretches climbed the rock against which the old man stood, and threw down great stones upon him until he fell dead.

When the news reached Rome Appius and the other nine Men pretended to be dreadfully shocked ; but the people, though they said little, were not deceived in the least, and knew in their hearts that the brave old soldier had been murdered.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE LAY OF THE MAIDEN VIRGINIA.

VIRGINIA was a lovely girl of about sixteen, the daughter of an officer in the army named VIRGINIUS. She was betrothed to a man named ICILIUS, who had formerly been a Tribune of the People; but she was still very young, and went to school (to learn to knit and sew, I suppose) with the other Roman girls.

On her way to school she passed morning and evening before the judgment-seat of Appius Claudius. This bad man was struck by her beauty the first time he saw her pass. Next day he watched for her, and thought her prettier still. On the day after that, and the following days, he thought of nothing else but her, and sat in his seat moodily plotting schemes to steal her away. . At last he hit upon a plan.

As she passed along with her nurse, laughing and talking, a man rushed upon her, seized her roughly, and cried, "Ha! I've caught you; you're my old slave!"

Virginia screamed, and so did the nurse, and very soon a crowd gathered around them. The people took her side, and MARCUS CLAUDIUS, the man who had seized her, would very soon have had his business settled but for his offer to take the girl straight

to Appius and let him decide. The people knew that Virginia was the daughter of Virginius, and nobody's slave; and they said to each other that Appius would, of course, set her free.

They little knew how the villain had watched her with his wicked eyes, and made up the plot to steal her.

When Marcus Claudius went before Appius and claimed her as his slave, Appius said it was a very clear case, and that she must go to him.

The people were much excited, and asked would he wait a day till her father Virginius could be sent for, to prove that she was his daughter?

Cunning Appius thought a while, and then said he would: "For," said he to himself, "if I decide the case to-day, there will certainly be a riot; but to-morrow I can have all my friends, the nobles, and their hangers-on to back me, and beat down the people." So Virginia was let go for that day. Swift horsemen started at once to the camp where Virginius was, to bid him come to Rome at full speed to save his daughter. Appius likewise sent messengers to the generals of the army, bidding them keep Virginius where he was; but they were outstripped in the race by the others, and Virginius started at the first watch of the night, and arrived safely at Rome.

Next day poor little Virginia was brought into court with a fluttering heart. Her father was there, and so was her lover, Icilius, both looking as black as thunder; and there was he who claimed her as his slave, Marcus Claudius, with his hang-dog face;

and Appius himself, on his judgment-seat, cold, and stern, and cruel. To the court, too, came hundreds and hundreds of stout men, who knew Virginus, and felt in their hearts that the end of their wrongs was not far off.

After Marcus Claudius had brought forward his proofs—they were, of course, a mass of lies got up by Appius himself—Appius gave judgment that the girl should be given up to him.

A groan rose from the people, and Virginus and Icilius and many others tried to plead for the poor crying child; but Appius waved to his axemen, “Clear away the mob, I say: make room for the man to take away the girl!”

Then Virginus, in a quiet tone, asked, as a last favor, to be allowed to kiss his child once more before she was carried away. Appius answered, “Well, let it be done quickly.”

Virginus took his trembling daughter in his arms, and drew her on one side, as if to get out of the crowd. Near where he stood was a butcher’s stall, and on the stall a large butcher’s knife. He gave Virginia one kiss, then, saying “This is the only way my child, to keep thee free,” he seized the knife, and plunged it up to the hilt in her poor beating heart.

“Tyrant!” he shouted fiercely, turning to Appius, “on thee and on thy head be the curse of this innocent blood. Make way!” and with the red knife in his hand he dashed through the crowd, no one daring to stop him.

A terrible shout arose from the mob at the sight

of the hapless maiden's blood. "Vengeance! vengeance!" cried Icilius, "Down with the tyrants!" And the people echoed the cry, "Vengeance!"

Appius rose from his seat, pale and frightened, and bade his axemen clear the way for him. The nobles thronged to his side, and drew their swords to keep back the people. They had terrible work to get the bad man home. If the people had caught him they would have torn him limb from limb; as it was, they charged again and again, like the waves of the sea, against the guard of nobles and axemen, and threw stones and dirt at him, and roared again, till Appius nearly died of agony and fright. The miserable wretch covered his face with his robe, and crouched behind his friends, while they cut and battered the heads of the nearest among the crowd, and fought their way to his house inch by inch.

He was safe at last. But the people's blood was up. Virginius marched furiously through the camp with his bloody knife in his hand, and all the soldiers, when they heard his story, struck their tents and marched away to Rome, leaving their generals behind. In the city every man was afoot, Icilius leading them. The cry was: "To Mount Aventine!"

And to the old familiar hill they flocked, with their wives and their children, an angry throng. I am not at all surprised that the legend says their first idea was to seize Appius and the other nine Men and burn them alive.

The nobles, as usual, tried to cajole them, and sent them civil messages, begging them to return

home, and promising that all would be forgotten. But the people answered that, on the contrary, they intended that all should be remembered, and that the blood of poor murdered Virginia must be avenged. Then the nobles—who grew very humble and cringing when the people threatened—made all sorts of excuses for the past, and promised any thing and every thing for the future. Only forgive them this once, and they would be the best friends of the people forever after.

And in the end, says the story, they were forgiven, as usual—Appius Claudius with the others, greatly to the honor of the people. All Rome said, however, that the Ten Men must be done away with; and Appius and another of them having cut their own throats in the prison where they were put for safe keeping, there was an end of them and of their story.

VOL. I.—H



OUTLET OF THE ALBAN LAKE.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LAY OF VEII AND THE BRAVE CAMILLUS.

THERE is a lake near Rome, imbedded in high land, called the Alban Lake. Its waters are higher than part of the lowland of the Roman country; and they stand so nearly on a level with its banks that in spring and after heavy rains they would overflow and drown the valleys around, were it not for a tunnel which carries them off to the sea. This tunnel has stood and has carried off the waters of the lake for more than two thousand years.

When the Roman children asked how this tun-

nel came there, and who built it, this is the story they were told.

Once upon a time the people of Rome were at war with the people of Veii. Now Veii was a strong, walled city; so strong, and so full of great-hearted and stout-limbed men that the Romans could not take it, though they attacked it with all their might and main, and lay besieging it for seven long years.

They had been seven years encamped opposite Veii, when the waters of the Alban Lake (on whose borders stood Veii) began to overflow. They rose and rose till they poured over the banks of the lake; rose and rose still, till they covered the tops of young trees and cottages in the valley. The Romans were greatly alarmed at this deluge, and sent to their augurs to know what it meant. The augurs said it was a very strange circumstance indeed, and they couldn't account for it. Wouldn't it be best to send to the oracle at Delphi and see if they knew any thing about it there?

Just about this time a Roman soldier met near the city an augur from Veii, made him prisoner, and led him to the general's tent. When the general heard he was an augur, he bade him consult his art and say what the rise in the waters meant. The old man was at first loth to speak, but when the Romans hinted that they would soon find a way of opening his mouth, he said,

"When the waters of the lake flow no more over the land, then woe to Veii!"

The Romans were puzzling their heads about the

meaning of this strange prophecy when their messenger returned from Delphi. He brought word from the oracle that when the Romans drained off the waters of the lake all would go well with them, and Veii would be theirs. Very good advice, too.

The Romans, never doubting the oracle, set to work, dug ditches and drains, and began to cut a great tunnel through the rock by the side of the lake. The rock was soft, but very thick ; it took them two years hard work to cut so much of the tunnel as would draw off the waters of the lake. But at last they completed the work ; the tunnel did its duty, and the waters of the lake fell to their old level.

Veii being still as strong and unyielding as ever, the Romans thought a Dictator was needed for the business, so they had one of the Consuls appoint **FURIUS CAMILLUS**.

He, says the story, finding the soldiers expert at digging and ditching—they had had practice enough—set them to dig an underground passage under the walls of Veii. They dug and dug by day and by night, just as soldiers dig at sieges nowadays ; and at last, by measuring, and by listening at the roof of their underground passage, they found they had wormed their way underneath a temple of Juno in the heart of the city of Veii.

It chanced that the people of Veii were in the temple at the time, sacrificing to Juno. An ox had been killed, and its quivering carcass lay upon the altar. The high-priest, turning to the King of Veii, who stood by, cried, “The gods pronounce that they will send victory to him who offers this sacrifice !”

At that very moment the Roman soldiers broke the ground over their heads, and leaped up among the people of Veii. They flew back in affright at the sudden apparition ; and Camillus, seizing the ox, offered it up to Juno himself. Then he bade his men charge. Some fell upon the people of Veii ; others ran to open the gates and let in their comrades ; and so, before the sun went down, Veii was taken.

It was so rich a city, says the legend, that all the army was enriched by the spoil. Gold and silver, ivory and brass, rich stuffs and jewels, were carried to Rome by the cart-load. Among other things, there was a statue of Juno which Camillus wanted to take to Rome. But when some one went to the statue and asked, Would it like to remove to Rome ? it answered, in a polite way, that it rather liked the idea. And so saying, it stepped gracefully off its pedestal and walked to Rome at a round pace.

This is nothing, you know, to the statue of the Virgin, which in much later times took a fancy to change its lodgings, and traveled ever so many miles through the air to the Church at Loretto, in Italy. But traveling is easier in modern times than it was in the days of Veii, so we must not think lightly of Juno.

Camillus had a splendid triumph at Rome in honor of his victory. - He entered the city in a chariot drawn by four milk-white horses ; the army following him, singing and cheering ; and then came the prisoners from Veii, chained together in pairs, with their hands bound, and looking very miserable. The triumph lasted four days ; and during

all that time rich men kept open house and bade all who chose eat of their bread and drink of their wine. From morning till night the temples were thronged by pious Romans, who went to offer up thanks for their victory.

The next story about Camillus relates how he was besieging the Etruscan city of Falerii, and almost despaired of taking it, when a strange accident occurred.

A schoolmaster of the place used to walk out every day with his scholars. He thought, no doubt, that the Romans would take the place in the end; and to curry favor for himself, treacherously led his boys within their camp and handed them over to Camillus, saying slyly that, no doubt, if Camillus threatened to put the boys to death, their parents would yield.

"Villain!" cried Camillus, "dost thou suppose we make war upon innocent boys?"

The schoolmaster was a good deal taken aback by this fierce answer. He was much more disgusted, however, when Camillus bade the boys cut good stout rods, and thrash the fellow all the way back to the city. The boys rather enjoyed it, and I shouldn't wonder if they laid it on with a will.

At all events, they got back to their friends and told them the story. At which, says the legend, the people of Falerii were so much struck with the handsome behavior of Camillus that they sent him proposals for peace, and became very good friends of the Romans.

There is another story about Camillus which is not so pleasant as this.

In olden times it was commonly the custom for soldiers to strip a conquered city of every thing they could carry away: this was the reward of their conquest. It was a very bad custom, as it made the soldiers mere robbers; but in olden times this was not thought of, and so, as I mentioned before, when Veii was taken, every thing worth stealing was stolen by the Roman soldiers.

A long while afterward, Camillus suddenly remembered that he had made a vow to give a tithe of the spoil to Apollo. The people said it was very strange he had not thought of this before; but the augurs (who managed the express-business between Rome and the residence of the gods) saying positively that a vow must not on any account be broken, every man who had shared in the spoil now came forward and accounted for a tenth of what he had had.

The Romans did not much like disgorging in this way; and while they were in an ill temper, some one bethought himself that the brass gates of Veii had not been forthcoming. Search being made, they were found in Camillus's house. The legend says he had not concealed them, but had kept them openly as his share of the plunder; still, the people were so angry with him that they tried him for the offense, and condemned him to leave the city.

It is not pleasant to read in the old legend that as he went out of Rome his heart was full of bitterness and revenge, and he turned round and prayed that the gods would send trouble upon Rome. However, we shall hear of him again.

CHAPTER XX.

THE STORY OF THE GAULS.

THE next legend—about the Gauls—is no doubt founded on fact.

Beyond the Apennines, in the countries which we call Piedmont and Lombardy, there lived at this time a race of men whom the Romans called Gauls. They were in many respects not unlike the old races of Indians in this country; led a wild roving life, built no large cities, knew little of art or science, and spent their time in hunting and fighting. Like the Indians, they rushed to battle in confused crowds, shouting and yelling, and making unearthly noises with horns and trumpets. Like them, they were fierce and cruel, and put their prisoners to death savagely. As the Indians in former times used to scalp those whom they killed in battle, and wore the scalps afterward as a proof of valor, so these Gauls used to cut off the heads of their enemies, and tie them by the hair to the manes of their horses. Like the Indians, they were very fond of adorning their persons with jewels, and as they had plenty of gold among them, the chiefs used to wear golden collars, and golden bracelets, and chains of gold round their necks.

They were, however, a much stronger, bolder, and, no doubt, manlier race than the Indians. Their

warriors were giants; with their long shaggy hair, and their huge broadswords, with which they would cleave a man's skull to his neck at a single stroke, they looked very terrible indeed.

These Gauls, says the legend, hearing there was, south of the mountains, a lovely country where the sun was always warm and the grapes luscious, started on a foray thither. One story says they were invited by a poor man who had been ill-used by the nobles and sought revenge; but they were not people to wait for invitations.

Over the mountains they poured, under their brave leader, BRENNUS or BRENHIN, and sat them down at the foot of the Apennines, near the pretty city of Clusium. The people of Clusium, frightened out of their wits, sent to Rome for help.

The story says that the Romans sent three nobles—Fabii—to Brennus, to try to persuade him to be the friend, and not the enemy, of the Italian cities. Brennus said he was quite ready to do all they wanted; only give him half the land which belonged to Clusium and he would be the best friend they had.

Of course the Clusians didn't like the idea of giving up half their land. They said the Gauls had no right to it. To which Brennus, like a good many other soldiers in much later times, answered, pointing to his big broadsword, that that sword gave him a right to every thing he could take.

Then the Gauls and the Clusians fell on and fought with great fury for some time. But in the midst of the fight—so says the story—Brennus perceived that the Fabii were leading on the Clusians.

He bade his trumpeter sound a retreat instantly, for it was accounted a shameful act, in those times as now, to harm an ambassador, and he was afraid that the Fabii might chance to be killed.

When the Gauls had drawn back, Brennus chose three or four of his hugest warriors, and sent them to Rome to demand that the Fabii should be given up, because they had drawn sword upon the Gauls while their nation was at peace with Rome. The Romans were at first much shocked at the bad conduct of their ambassadors, and most of the people were for giving them up; but afterward, thinking the matter over, and believing that they need not mind behaving fairly with so rude a race as the Gauls, they told the huge warriors they would not give up the Fabii. They were even so vain and so foolish as to elect them Tribunes.

When Brennus heard their answer he sounded a march, and all the Gauls struck their tents and marched down toward Rome. The Romans went out to meet them, and took their stand on the banks of the little River Allia. They very soon saw how gross a blunder they had made in despising the Gauls; for on they came like a swarm of bees, covering the whole face of the land, blowing their shrill horns and trumpets, and shouting in their wild language. They very quickly got to the right of the Romans, and, falling on them on two sides at once, routed them with great slaughter.

The Romans ran homeward, huddled together like sheep; the Gauls after them, hurling darts, and chopping down the hindmost with their tremendous

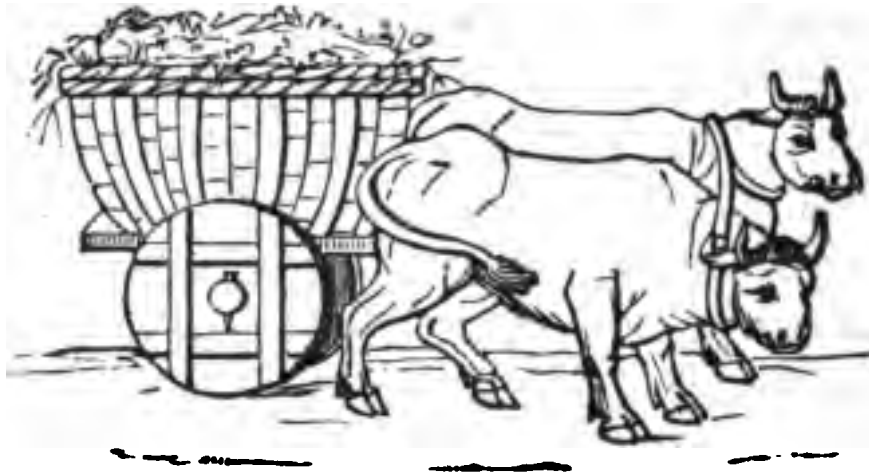
broadswords. Ever so many Romans plunged into the River Tiber and were drowned; and all the road to Rome was heaped up with dead bodies.

It was well for the Romans that the Gauls, as their custom was, spent that night and the next day, and the day after that, in feasting and drinking and stripping the dead men of their clothes and their armor. This gave the Romans time to carry off the most precious of their goods to hiding-places in the villages hard by. Many of the people went with the goods, and took their household gods, and their wives, and their children, with them; and all the roads leading from Rome were choked with carts and people on foot, just as they had been in the days of Lars Porsenna.

Among others, the vestal virgins left Rome, and trudged over the road, carrying with them the sa-



HOUSEHOLD GODS.



ROMAN CART.

cred fire, which, as you remember, they had vowed to keep alight. But a pious citizen, seeing the poor girls weary and way-sore while he drove along in his cart, made his wife alight with his children, and took up the virgins and their fire-pot into his cart in their place.

At this dark hour for Rome I am very glad that the legend says the nobles behaved with great spirit and manliness. The younger among them, with the bravest of the people, betook themselves to the Capitol, barred the gates, and prepared for a siege. The elder ones—those who were too old to fight—gathered together, and, with the high-priest and the augurs, resolved to die in a manner worthy of Rome.

When, therefore, the Gauls had done feasting and marched on to Rome—which was deserted and empty—these brave old men arrayed themselves in their robes of state—some all white with a broad scarlet border, others colored with gold embroidery—and sat down in their ivory chairs in the Forum.

The Gauls rushed in, and were amazed to find the streets empty, and to hear no sound but the hollow echo of their own footsteps. But they were much

more astonished when they saw these white-headed old men sitting silently on their ivory chairs. At first they thought they were gods. Then, seeing them so grave and so still, they fancied they were statues. To find out what they were, a Gaul stroked the long white beard of old MARCUS PAPIRIUS. In his wrath at the insult, the old man raised his ivory sceptre and struck the rude Gaul on the head; on which the Gaul killed him on the spot. The others were soon murdered in the same way. Then the Gauls set fire to the city, and burned it all down except a few houses in which they lodged themselves.

But the Romans still held the Capitol, which, as you remember, was on a high hill. Brennus resolved to storm it, and led his men up the hill with their shields over their heads; but when they were half way up, the Romans rushed down upon them, and tumbled them down to the bottom. The Gauls tried it again; but again they were thrown down.

Then Brennus made up his mind to starve out the Romans. He girt the hill round with a strong line of men, so that no one could go out or in except through the Gauls. Then he waited patiently till the food of the Romans should be exhausted.

While he was waiting, the friends of the Romans were gathering in the country around, and a brave young Roman, named PONTIUS COMINTUS, crept cautiously toward Rome one night, swam across the Tiber without making the least noise, climbed the steep rock, and bore the good news to the Romans within the Capitol. When he had told his message and cheered up his countrymen, he let himself

down again into the river, swam across, and got away safely.

Next day a Gaul noticed that some of the bushes growing on that side of the hill were pulled up. He guessed at once that some one had climbed the hill; and Brennus ordered the Gauls to try if they could not climb it too.

Accordingly, when night came, and the defenders of the Capitol were asleep, the Gauls started, marching silently and stealthily. They mounted the hill, clinging to the bushes and ledges of rock, and the foremost had reached the top, when all at once the sacred geese, which were in the Temple of Juno, on the Capitol, set up a loud cackle.

This roused MARCUS MANLIUS, who ran to the edge of the hill, and seeing a Gaul about to leap over the wall, knocked him down with his shield. Other Romans came in a twinkling, and hurled down Gaul after Gaul as he climbed up. So, after a short struggle, the Gauls went back whence they came.

The Romans were so grateful for their wonderful escape that, ever after that day, they spoke respectfully of the goose; and as for Marcus Manlius, each man in the Capitol gave him half a day's food—a better gift than millions of gold when all were so near starving.

Still Brennus was not discouraged. He drew his Gauls closer round the hill, and kept sharper watch at night, feeling quite certain that in time the Romans must yield from hunger.

The legend says that when the brave men within

the Capitol had only a few pounds of meal left, they baked it into hard loaves, and threw them into the camp of the Gauls. This, together with the evil effects of the sultry summer weather, induced Brennus to think of giving up the siege. He sent word to the Romans that he would lead his men away if they would give him a thousand pounds' weight of gold.

The Romans agreed, and, as the legend says, they began to weigh the gold out, when some dispute arose between them and the Gauls as to the weights, the Romans saying they were false, the Gauls that they were true. At this Brennus, stepping up haughtily, threw his broadsword into the scale and shouted, "Woe to the conquered!" By which he meant that the Romans had no business to complain however they were dealt with.

But at that very moment who should come up but old Camillus at the head of a great body of fighting men from the country? When he heard what was in dispute, he cried, angrily, that Rome paid her debts with steel and not with gold, and gave the word of battle. The Gauls fought well, but the Romans fought better. Camillus won the day, and sent the gold back to the Capitol.

It was then the Gauls' turn to complain, and the Romans' turn to cry, "Woe to the conquered!" The legend says that not only did the Gauls lose the promised booty, but their leader, Brennus, lost his head too.

However, the Gauls, who were not so famous for their legends as the Romans, had an old story about

this capture of Rome; and in their story there is nothing at all said about Camillus or his victory. In their legend the Gauls carried off the gold in triumph, and long afterward used to show lumps of it to strangers, till, one unlucky day, the Romans invaded their country in their turn, and took the gold away.

It is almost certain that the Gauls did win a great battle over the Romans at the River Allia, and that they afterward burned Rome. As long as there was a Roman nation the anniversary of the dreadful day of Allia was kept with mourning and sorrow, and the stories of the burning of the city were handed down in every family till the old historians wrote them in their histories.



THE BRENNUS SHIELD.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE LEGEND OF MANLIUS.

THE old legend says that when the poverty-stricken Romans returned to Rome and found their houses burned down, their vines uprooted, their fields ravaged, and all they had in the world gone, they lost heart, and began to think Rome was a doomed city, and they had better leave it. They were debating the matter in the Senate, and old Camillus had called upon each Senator to say whether he was for going away or staying, when the centurion, or officer on guard outside, happened to give the word of command to his men—"Halt!"



A CENTURION.

At this the Romans, who were a very superstitious people, suddenly resolved to stay at Rome, believing that the order they had heard thus accidentally was intended by the gods for their guidance.

The next story was about Marcus Manlius—the man who had hurled the first Gaul down from the Capitol on the night when it was so nearly stormed.

He was a rich man, according to the story, and when he saw a poor old soldier being dragged to prison for a debt which he owed and could not pay, he straightway furnished the poor man with the money to satisfy his creditor, and set him free. The old soldier went back to his wife and children in high glee, and told them and every one he met how he had been saved, and how Marcus Manlius was as generous as he was brave. The story soon ran round the city, and every man was praising and blessing Manlius.

He, when the people thronged round him and cheered him, said he had done nothing to merit such gratitude; but since the people thought well of him, he would try to deserve their good-will. They were all very poor at the time, in consequence of the war with the Gauls; almost all had been forced to go to the nobles and borrow, at the risk of being chained up and sold into slavery if they could not repay what they had borrowed. Marcus Manlius now said that so long as he had a single *as* (which was the Roman copper coin) or a foot of land he would not let any Roman be chained up for debt.

He kept his word. He sold a large estate which

he had, and with the money paid the debt of every man whose creditor tried to oppress him.

This was the story of Mælius over again. The people adored Manlius: the nobles grew jealous of him, and took counsel to get rid of him. They thought the old plan the best; so they sent for the Consul and bade him appoint a Dictator. He appointed CORNELIUS COSSUS, who forthwith had Manlius seized and thrown into prison on a charge of treason.

When the people knew of it, they burst into loud complaints. Crowds of them gathered round the prison, and hung about the doors all day long, with torn clothes and uncombed hair, as signs of their grief. At last they grew so bold, and their threats so violent, that the nobles were afraid, and set Manlius free, on condition that he was to appear to stand his trial for treason on a day fixed.

He was first tried before the assembly by tribes, where the whole Roman people sat as judges. He defended himself, and brought forward four hundred poor Romans whose debts he had paid to bear witness on his behalf. Then he reminded the people of the many victories he had won, of the lives he had saved in battle, of his wounds. When the people were excited, he turned suddenly round to the Capitol, which stood full in view, and asked them, in a voice of thunder, whether they had forgotten what he had done for Rome there?

A tremendous shout proved that the people remembered well. And they acquitted Manlius on the spot.

But the nobles had no idea of being beaten so easily. A short while afterward they contrived to have Manlius tried again in the assembly by classes, where the people had very little power, and the nobles (through their wealth and their hangers-on) a great deal. This assembly condemned Manlius to death as a traitor; and he was thrown from the Tarpeian rock, as the law of Rome directed. Even after his death, says the story, the spite of the nobles did not abate; they razed his house to the ground, and took away from his children the remains of his property.

It was soon after this, says the story, that the Roman people, goaded beyond endurance by the wrongs they suffered, resolved to seek relief and pro-



THE TARPEIAN ROCK.

tection by having one of the Consuls chosen from their own class. The nobles made a strong fight on the question, and the augurs said that the gods couldn't bear the idea; but the people steadfastly adhered to the point, and carried it—choosing LUCIUS SEXTUS, who was not a noble, to be Consul.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE LEGEND OF CURTIUS.

THERE was always—until very modern times—a pool or marshy spot in the Forum at Rome. About this spot there was a legend, and the legend was this :

After the Gauls had burned Rome, all at once, in a single night, a huge gulf or hole yawned open in the middle of the Forum. When the people saw it next day they were greatly alarmed, and ran to the augurs to know what it meant. The augurs pretended to consult the gods, and made answer that the gulf would not close till the best and truest strength of Rome had been offered up as a sacrifice for the city.

Men puzzled their brains to find out what was the best and truest strength of Rome. One said gold was the thing meant ; another said steel ; and another something else. But while they were debating on the point, a brave young noble, named CURTIUS, said that Rome's soldiers were her best and truest strength. So, having equipped himself in his complete armor, and mounted his war-horse, he bade adieu to his friends, and rode at full gallop into the gulf ; which closed over him, and never opened more.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE LEGEND OF VALERIUS THE CROW.

ONE of the most famous heroes of these old legends was named VALERIUS.

When yet a stripling, he fought a stout Gaul; and while the fight was going on, a crow sailed down, perched on the Gaul's head, and picked out his eyes with its beak and claws. When the Gaul was blinded, Valerius, of course, made short work of him; and in memory of the feat the Romans gave him the surname of CORVUS, or THE CROW.

Perhaps this story, and one or two others which I have yet to tell, may remind you of Jack the Giant-killer. But Valerius was a very superior hero to Jack.

He was several times Consul, and when the war with the Samnites broke out (the Samnites were a people of herdsmen living in the country to the southeast of the Romans, and the old legends say the Romans fought them for fifty-five years) he led the armies. He was a good general, and a great favorite with the soldiers, with whom he would eat his hard cakes and crack his joke as freely as the lowest among them.

After having beaten the Samnites, says the legend, he went back to Rome, leaving his army encamped near the rich and idle city of Capua, in the

heart of the lovely country called Campania. The soldiers liked their quarters so well, that when the order came for them to strike their tents and return home, they said flatly they would do no such thing. Their officers insisting, they rose against them, refused to obey them, and chose an old noble named QUINTIUS to lead them. On this the people at Rome, in sore dismay and trouble, made Valerius the Crow Dictator, in the hope that he would find some way of saving them from a war with their own army.

Valerius bade every man in Rome arm himself and march forth to meet the mutineers. When the two armies drew near each other, he gave the word to halt, and stepping forward with a pleasant smile on his face, he cried, "Who is going to kill Valerius the Crow?"

No one answering, but those who stood nearest him in the rebel army beginning to feel rather ashamed, he walked straight up to one, and asked him would *he* be friends again; then to another, and put the same question. Meanwhile his own men following close on his heels, and the mutineers likewise pressing forward to see what he was saying to their comrades, both armies stood very close to each other, and soldiers in both began to recognize old friends in the ranks opposite them; thus softened, when Valerius gave a great shout and a hearty laugh, all together flung down their arms and embraced. So this great mutiny, which had like to have put an end to Rome, was happily quelled, and the legend of Valerius the Crow came happily to an end.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE LEGEND OF MANLIUS TORQUATUS.

THE great house of the MANLI, who were one of the richest and most powerful families of Rome, had a fine legend about an ancestor of theirs, whose name was TITUS MANLIUS, but who got the surname of TORQUATUS from his first exploit.

In one of the wars with the Gauls (who returned again and again to plunder the rich fields of southern Italy) he challenged a huge Gaul to single combat in presence of the two armies. The Gaul was such a giant that Manlius appeared like a little boy beside him, and every one said, when the two marched forth to the fighting ground, that the Gaul would cleave the Roman in twain with a single blow. But when the fight began, Manlius ran at the Gaul, and lifting up the huge shield he bore, stooped under it quickly, and ran his sword into the Gaul's body. The giant fell with such a crash that the earth trembled; and his corpse, says the old story, covered quite a tract of land. Manlius took from his neck his gold necklace, which the Romans called a *torques*; and therefrom he got the surname of Torquatus.

Manlius became after this a great leader of the Romans. When the Latin cities (which were the cities scattered round Rome, and with which the Romans were perpetually waging war in these old

legends) sent to Rome to ask the Romans to become one nation with them, so as to end their wars, the proposal appeared such an insult to Manlius Torquatus that he seized the Latin messenger by the nape of the neck and threw him down the Senate steps. Being afterward blamed for this rudeness, however, he explained that he had been privately inspired by Jupiter to throw the Latin down ; which made all right, of course.

War was then declared with the Latins, and the two armies encamped opposite each other. As they were alike in all respects, wore the same dress, spoke the same tongue, and used the same arms, Manlius, who commanded the Romans, ordered that no Roman should leave the ranks or engage the enemy without special direction from him.

Now there was a bold Latin, whose name was GEMINIUS METRIUS, who was thirsting for the blood of a Roman. He rode up to the Roman lines, flourishing his spear, and taunted the Romans, asking if there was no one there who would like to die by his hand. The Romans stood still at first, on account of the order ; but at last young TITUS MANLIUS, the general's son, goaded to madness, mounted his horse, and rode into the plain to fight him.

They rode at each other fiercely, and Manlius drove his spear into the head of the horse which Metrius rode. The poor beast reared, and threw its rider. As he fell to the ground, Manlius pierced his body through with his spear.

Then, as the custom was, he stripped his body of his armor, and bore it away in triumph to his fa-

ther the Consul. "Father," said the young man, proudly, "I offer you these spoils that you may not be ashamed of me, and that men may know I am your son."

The stern old Consul said never a word. He made a sign to his bugler beside him, and the bugle sounded; and the army, with the captains, gathered round the place where he stood. Then, turning to his son, he reminded him of the order he had given against leaving the ranks, and said that, so far from escaping punishment because he was his son, he ought to be judged more severely than another; adding firmly to his axeman, "Go, bind him to the stake!"

The axeman led the young man to the stake and bound him, while the Consul and the army looked on in breathless suspense. Then the axeman with a blow of his axe chopped off his head.

A great cry arose from the army at the cruel sight, and many cursed the Consul, while all bewailed the fate of the brave youth. They burned his body, as the Roman habit was, with great honors. And ever after that time harsh and cruel orders were called "Manlian."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE LEGEND OF DECIUS.

ANOTHER hero of these times was DECIUS MUS, whose family afterward became famous at Rome.

The Romans were at war with the Latins, and a great battle was being fought beneath the shade of the burning mountain Vesuvius. The Romans giving ground, and the Latins pressing them hard, the Consul Decius cried, "The gods must help us now. Bid the high-priest come hither!"

When the high-priest came, Decius said that the day was lost for the Romans unless the gods interfered on their behalf. Then he asked in what way he could give up his life to the gods of the dead, so as to win their favor for the army.

The high-priest bade him wrap his toga round his body, stand upon a spear, and cover his face with his hand while he repeated a solemn vow after the high-priest. Decius obeyed, and hiding his face with his hand, he cried, "I devote my body to the infernal gods, in the faith that death may help the Romans." This said, he rushed furiously into the Latin host, and after killing many, was at last overwhelmed, and died covered with wounds.

The legend said that the gods heard his prayer; that the Latins were seized with a strange panic, after Decius's death, and were routed with great slaughter.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE LEGEND OF PAPIRIUS CURSOR AND QUINTUS FABIVS,
AND THEIR SONS.

PAPIRIUS CURSOR was another great Roman general in these legendary wars against the Samnites.

Once, as he was going to fight a battle, the augurs consulted the gods at Rome, and said that the gods wished particularly that Papirius should consult them himself before any battle was fought. So orders were sent to Papirius (who was in the field with the army) to come to Rome directly. He started off at once, leaving particular directions with his aid, QUINTUS FABIVS, not on any account to engage the enemy in his absence.

Perhaps Fabius did not think so much of the augurs as Papirius did. Perhaps he suspected Papirius wanted to get all the glory of beating the Samnites. At all events, as soon as Papirius was gone, he called the troops to arms, and gave the word of battle. The Samnites fought bravely; but the Romans carried every thing before them, and won the day.

When Papirius returned to the camp, and found that Fabius had won a battle in his absence, and against his orders, he flew into a terrible rage, and was for chopping his head off instantly. But this the soldiers prevented by gathering tumultuous-

ly round the general, and filling the air with such shouts that Papirius could not make himself heard. Fabius took care to mount his horse that very night and ride away to Rome.

When he arrived there he went before the Senate and began to explain what he had done, and accuse Papirius; but in the middle of his speech, in rushed Papirius himself, who had ridden at full speed from the camp, and was bent on having Fabius's head. He called on the axemen to seize him and execute him.

Up rose the father of Fabius, an old man, who had been Consul and Dictator: he begged Papirius to spare his son's life. The Senators, too, were moved by the young man's danger, and they besought Papirius to be satisfied with some slight punishment.

But Papirius sternly answered that as Manlius had put his own son to death for disobeying orders, so he would have Fabius beheaded for the like offense; and he bade the axemen seize him.

Then old Fabius, though a noble, turned to the Tribunes of the People, and called on them to protect his son. They said they would, and summoned Papirius to appear before the assembly of the people to make good his charges.

The Dictator appeared before them accordingly, but would not abate a hair's-breadth of his demands. Fabius he must have, he said; and as for the Tribunes, he warned them not to give an example of setting at naught the power of a Dictator. He was so stern and so resolute that, after a long struggle, the Tribunes yielded, and Fabius was given up. For

the last time Papirius bade the axemen unsheath the axes.

At that terrible order the Tribunes, and all the people who were standing by, rushed to Papirius, and begged the prisoner's life as a favor to them. Old Fabius clasped his knees, and joined in their prayer. Then Papirius, having commanded silence, said aloud that, as the Roman people begged the life of Fabius, he would grant their request, and spare him; but he warned them that the next officer who refused to obey his orders would certainly be put to death.

About the son of this Papirius Cursor (who was named like his father), and about Quintus Fabius and his son, there were also other stories.

Papirius the son was going to give battle to the Samnites at the head of his army, when he sent in great haste to the priests, as became a pious Roman, to ask, "What of the sacred chickens?"

"They ate their food so greedily," said their feeder, "that some of it dropped from their mouths."

Then Papirius, quite satisfied that the gods were for him, gave the word of battle. But just as the Romans were going to fall on, his nephew went to him, and whispered in his ear that the feeder had spoken untruly—the sacred chickens had not fed at all.

Papirius did not hesitate an instant. "Let the feeder be placed in the front of the army," said he, "and march!"

At the very first onset the unlucky feeder was killed, and the Samnites pressed on, fighting more

furiously than ever. As they advanced, however, they saw, on both sides of them, horses galloping down in clouds of dust; and supposing that they were the Roman cavalry in thousands and thousands (they were only the baggage-horses with hurdles tied to their tails), they turned and fled. So Papirius won the day.

Long after old Quintus Fabius had won the battle I have described, his son, FABIVS GURGES, was chosen Consul, and led the Roman armies against the Samnites. He was rash; and before he had been long in the field, the Samnites contrived to catch his army unawares and defeat it utterly.

When he returned to Rome the people were so furious with him that they were for putting him to death to punish him for his rashness. But when his old father came forward and reminded the Romans of what he had done for them long, long ago, and besought them to let his son try one more fight, they could not refuse him; and Fabius Gurgcs marched out again with an army, his old father following him as his aid.

The Samnites were soon found, and another battle fought. In the heat of it the Consul Fabius was surrounded, and would have been cut down, but for his father, who came galloping down, with his old white head bare, and a band of horsemen spurring behind him, and rescued his son. At this the Romans rallied, and the Samnites were beaten.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LEGEND OF PONTIUS.

THE Samnites had a brave and gallant leader named PONTIUS, about whom there is a beautiful legend.

While the war was going on, he spread a report that he was going to march into Apulia. The Romans, eager for a battle, took the shortest road thither at once. On the way they passed through a deep hollow between two high and steep mountains: the hollow was afterward called the Caudine Forks. Well, the Romans marched into the hollow without suspecting any thing, and boasting of the victory they would win over Pontius; but as soon as the last man had entered the hollow, they heard a rustling behind them and in front of them, and lo! the Samnites, who had been hidden in the woods, had run down, and closed up both ends of the hollow. The Romans were caught in a trap. After a vain effort, first at one end then at another, to break out, they saw there was nothing for it but to surrender.

The leader, who was the Consul POSTUMIUS, sent word to the Samnites in true Roman style, that they confessed themselves beaten. "Put us to the sword," he said, "but bury our bodies decently." This he said because the Romans believed that un-

less their bodies were buried or burned, their souls could not find rest.

Pontius the Samnite was generous as well as brave. He said that he did not want to put the Romans to death; let them make peace with Samnium, restore all the land they had taken from the Samnites, and give up their arms: he asked no more. To these terms the Roman Consul very gladly agreed.

The Samnites then set two spears erect at the entrance of the defile, and placed a third spear across these at the top. Under this yoke the whole Roman army passed, and each man, as he passed through, laid down his arms and armor, and marched out with nothing but one garment. Pontius gave them food for the journey and wagons for their wounded. Six hundred young men, of the best families of Rome, were left with the Samnites, as pledges for the honest fulfillment of the treaty.

With very heavy hearts and downcast faces the army returned homeward. They were so overwhelmed by shame that they cared not to enter the city in daylight. They slunk in one by one at night, with their heads covered, and shut themselves up in their own houses to hide their disgrace. The people were as deeply grieved as they. All the nobles and chief citizens put on mourning, and laid aside their rings and other jewels. All feasts and even marriages were put off. So dreadful seemed the disgrace which the army had undergone.

When the Senate assembled, the new treaty with the Samnites was laid before it; and the late Consul

Postumius, who had signed it, was the first to say that it ought not to be approved. He gave it as his opinion that he himself and all the officers of the army who had signed the treaty should be given up to the Samnites; that the six hundred youths who had been left behind as pledges should be left in the hands of the enemy, to be dealt with as the Samnites chose; and finally, that the treaty should be rejected, and war made more fiercely than ever upon the Samnites.

This was not a very honest way of dealing; but the Romans stuck at nothing when the honor of the State was at stake; and they one and all approved the proposal of Postumius. So he, and the other Consul VETURIUS, with all the other officers of the army, were led back to Pontius with their hands bound, and their bodies stripped of their armor, in order that the Samnites might put them to death as persons who had broken their plighted faith.

But Pontius, who appears in the legend to have been a truly noble and beautiful character, refused to harm them, and sent them home again, saying that his quarrel was with Rome, not with them.

Sad, very sad, is the end of his story. Thirty years afterward, another battle was fought between the Romans and the Samnites, and Pontius, now a gray-headed old man, was taken prisoner. He was dragged behind the conqueror's chariot in the triumph at Rome, and when the Consul turned in the procession to mount the hill of the Capitol, a band of axemen seized Pontius and led him aside into the underground prison in the side of the hill. When

he was inside, the door was shut, and there, by the dusky light of torches, which burned badly in that damp, close place, they struck off his white head. A very shameful legend this, and one which I wonder the old ballad singers did not contrive to forget!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE LEGEND OF THE BATTLE OF SENTINUM.

THERE was a famous place in the mountains called Sentinum, where the story said that a great battle had been fought in these old Samnite wars. This is the legend of the battle :

The war was growing more and more severe for the Romans year after year. From among the smaller nations of Italy the Samnites persuaded several chiefs and clans to join them ; they even invited a party of Gauls to cross the mountains and enlist in their army, promising them the plunder of Rome as their reward. Strange signs, as usual in time of distress, were seen at Rome. One day, blood flowed from the altar of Jupiter on the Capitol ; on the next day, honey ; on the third, milk, from the same spot. When the augurs were asked what these signs meant, they answered that the blood was a sign that Rome would be victorious in the war ; the honey (which was a common medicine), that sickness would visit the city ; the milk, that there would be a famine throughout the land.

Then the news came that a band of Gauls, all on swift horses, had been seen galloping off to the north with ever so many Roman heads tied to the manes of the horses.

The Roman people would not allow themselves to

be downhearted, however; they raised the greatest army they could, put it under the command of the two Consuls QUINTUS FABIVS and DECIUS MUS (the son of the Decius Mus whose legend I have told you), and sent it into the Samnite country. It ravaged the country far and wide, and did not stay its hand till there was not a blade of grass left green.

Then the Samnites marched down to give the Romans battle at a place called Sentinum. As both armies were drawn up in order of battle, a deer, chased by a wolf, leaped out of a thicket and ran into the open space between them. The deer made straight for the Samnites, who killed it with their spears when it came within reach. The wolf, on the other hand, ran toward the Romans, and they, who held the wolf in great respect on account of Romulus having been nursed by one, allowed it to enter their ranks without harming it.

A Roman general instantly cried out that the goddess Diana would be sure to avenge the death of the deer, as she was supposed to take peculiar delight in such animals. And thus encouraged, the Romans made an onset.

It happened that the Gauls, who had come to help the Samnites, had brought with them their war-chariots, which were very long low carts with two wheels, and a sharp scythe fastened to the axle of each wheel outside. To these chariots were yoked fiery horses, which liked fighting as well as men. So, when the fight began, the Gauls lashed their horses and shook the reins; and the animals snorting, and neighing, dashed at the Romans at full speed. The

chariots broke through the Roman lines, the terrible scythes whirling round and round, and mowing down men like grass. Then the drivers turned, and starting their horses anew with a shout, tore upon the Romans on another side, mowing them down as before.

By this time the whole Roman army was in disorder, and the goddess Diana didn't appear to be doing them much good. One of the Consuls, DECIVS, the son of Decius Mus, bethought himself of what his father had done in the like case, and resolved to follow his example. Calling the high-priest to his side, and bidding him repeat the vow, he raised his sword above his head and charged alone into the Samnite army.

He was killed, of course ; but his death gave new courage to the Romans, who fancied it would secure them the victory. They charged again and again with such vigor that the Samnites and Gauls were checked, and gathered together into solid squares, covering themselves with their shields. Then the Romans picked up the darts and spears which lay on the field, and hurled them into the squares.

At last the Samnite general was killed, and the day was lost for his side. Slowly and in order his army retreated, leaving the Romans on the field of battle.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE STORY OF THE OGULNIAN LAWS.

I MENTIONED in the first chapter of this Child's History that a Roman could fill any office under the government without being a noble. According to the stories, it was not so at first. The people fought their way inch by inch. When they conquered the right of being Consuls, the nobles would not let them be Censors; when they conquered this, the nobles would not allow them to be Dictators; when they won this, too, the nobles forbade their becoming augurs or priests. The quarrel was finally settled by the Ogulnian laws. This is their story:

While the Samnite war was going on, and after the Samnites had won a great victory, there was dismay at Rome, and all men said that a Dictator should be chosen. Word was sent accordingly to the Consul, who chose **CLAUDIUS MARCELLUS**—a very good man for the office, but not a noble.

When the news reached Rome the nobles were terribly disgusted. "Was there no noble fit for the office," said they, one to another, "that he should choose a common man without family or ancestors?" While they were murmuring in this way, the time arrived for the augurs to consult the gods, and ascertain their views about the new Dictator.

Now the augurs were nobles to a man, of the noblest families in Rome.

After having consulted the gods, they rushed out to the people and said, with very white faces, that some terrible crime had been committed: the gods were awfully angry. What could it be? After a time some one hinted that it must be the appointment of Marcellus as Dictator. And the augurs, having consulted the gods again, came out and said, "Yes, that was the very thing."

So Marcellus was obliged to resign his office, and a noble was appointed in his stead.

Thinking over this matter in their homes, the people came to the conclusion that it was very little use for them to conquer the right of being elected to office if the augurs could come in at the last moment and say the gods were against them. They thought—and very reasonably—that as they prayed to the gods, they might consult them too; so their Tribunes, both of whom were named OGULNIUS, proposed a law by which, from that time forth, half of the augurs and priests were to be chosen from the people.

The nobles opposed it, of course. Their great leader, the Censor APPIUS CLAUDIUS (the same who built the Aqueduct and the great road to Capua, called after him the Appian Road) argued, threatened, begged; the augurs said the gods would never think of having any thing to say to common men; but the Tribunes OGULNI were firm as rocks, and the law was passed.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE LEGEND OF ESCULAPIUS.

NOT very long before the real history of Rome begins, the legend says that the plague broke out in the city, and thousands died of it. In sore dismay and trouble the people went to the augurs, and the augurs said that the best thing to be done under the circumstances was to see what the Sibylline Books said.

The Books were consulted in the way I have described, and they said that the only thing to be done was to send for ESCULAPIUS.

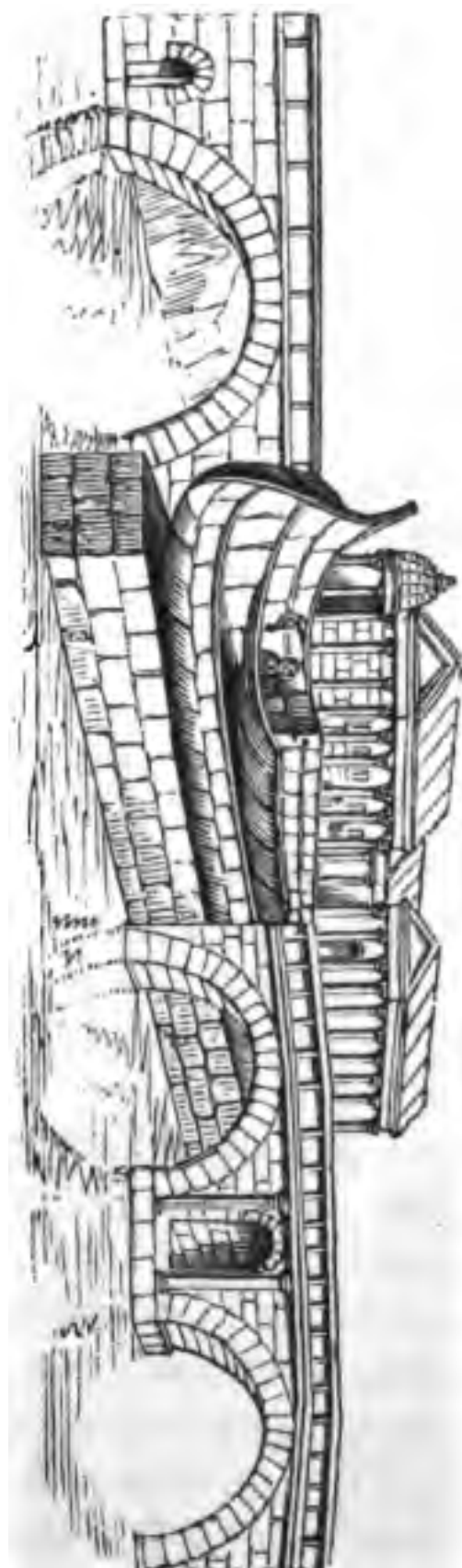
Now, as Esculapius was a famous doctor, you may, perhaps, think this was not such bad advice for the books to give. It would have been very good advice, indeed, but for one little circumstance. Esculapius had been dead over a hundred years. However, the Romans seemed to think that a dead doctor would answer as well as a live one, and perhaps they were right, too, as doctors went; and they sent off a trireme—which was a big boat with three rows of oars—to fetch Esculapius from Greece. When the trireme reached Epidaurus, the place where Esculapius had lived, and the Roman messengers explained what they wanted, the Epidaurians said it was all right, they had only to pray vigorously and Esculapius would come.

So they fell to praying with all their might, and while they were at work a large snake crawled out of a wood, traveled straight down to the trireme, and coiled itself up in the cabin. This was Esculapius, the people said; so the Romans, without more ado, took to their oars and pulled back again. On their way they stopped at a place called Antium, where there was a temple sacred to Esculapius. Here the snake uncoiled itself, went ashore, and remained three days in the temple.

On the fourth day it returned to the vessel, and the Romans pulled away to Rome. But just as they had cast anchor, the snake uncoiled itself once more, plunged into the Tiber, swam to a little island, and was never seen more.

The Romans were a little surprised at this singular conduct on the part of Doctor Snake; but

ISLAND IN THE TIBER.



they consoled themselves by hewing the rock of the island into the form of a trireme, and got well or died of the plague in their own way. If you go to Rome you may still see the island, and trace in its shape the form of the old trireme; and then, perhaps, you may wonder whether it was this curious shape which gave rise to the story, or the story which led to the curious shape.

B O O K I I

T H E R E P U B L I C.

CHAPTER XXXI.

PYRRHUS.

WE now come to the real history of Rome. There are a few legends still mixed with it, but the main story is true.

If you look at a map of Italy, you will perceive that it resembles a boot in shape. On the inside of the heel of the boot there stands a sea-port called Taranto, where people who are fond of good eating go to eat shell-fish. More than two thousand years ago this city was larger than it is now. It was then called Tarentum, and was known, far and wide, as one of the richest, and idlest, and gayest places in the world.

The people who lived there were Greeks, and, like all the Greeks of that day, they were polished, and very fond of art and luxury. Under the loveliest sky in the world, with the blue waters of the Mediterranean playing at their feet, the Tarentines spent their days in listening to soft music and tender poetry, in feasting, dancing, and love-making. They were so learned in the art of feeding, that their feasts

were the finest that were given any where, and their wines famous wherever wine was drunk.

A very different people from the Romans, you see; and if the Tarentines had been wise, they would have let the rough men of Rome alone.

But one day, as the Tarentines were gathered in their great theatre, which looked down upon the sea, they saw ten Roman ships come sailing round the point on the westward. They were not on very good terms with the Romans, whom they despised and called a barbarous people; and it seems, moreover, that Rome had agreed to send no ships into the Tarentine waters. So when the Tarentines saw the ten ships, they burst into fury; and collecting all their vessels, and crowding them with men, they attacked the Romans, and sunk four of the ships, took one, and put the crew to death.

When the news reached Rome, the people were much shocked, and sent one of their chief men, POSTUMIUS, to Tarentum to ask what it meant. He went before the Tarentines, who were assembled in the theatre to hear him, and began to deliver his message; but he was not a learned man, and spoke the Greek tongue—which was the only one known at Tarentum—with an uncouth, foreign accent. He had hardly uttered half a dozen words when the Tarentines burst out laughing at him.

He went on with great dignity, not seeming to notice their rudeness, till some fellow threw dirt at him, and soiled his white toga. Postumius raised the toga and showed it to the crowd, as if to ask if this were their treatment of a foreign ambassador. But

they only laughed more loudly than before, and jeered and scoffed at him.

“Laugh on,” then said the stern Roman, “while ye may: ye shall weep presently, and my toga shall be washed in your blood!”

So saying, he started homeward, and never stopped till he got to Rome, where he showed the people the stain on his toga, and told them of the insults he had suffered. The Romans asked no questions, but declared war against Tarentum.

War was not at all to the taste of the Tarentines, who preferred eating, and drinking, and dancing, to fighting. So they sent over to their friends in Greece to see if they could get any fighting men to cross to Tarentum and fight the Romans for them.

It fell out that the King of Epirus, in Greece, whose name was PYRRHUS, was just at that time in want of some one to fight with. He was a warlike king, and very ambitious, and as he had a large army at his call, nothing suited him better than to cross over to Italy. He did not care much for the Tarentines, but he supposed that, as he was a Greek, and learned, and lettered, and famous, he would be sure to beat the savage Romans, and would take their country as his reward.

So he crossed the sea with a great army of horsemen, and foot-soldiers, and over fifty elephants. When he landed at Tarentum, and found the people feasting, and singing, and drinking, as usual, he lost patience with them, shut up their theatre and their places of amusement, and gave orders that every man must make ready to fight. If any idler grum-

bled, his guards cut off his head. You may fancy how pleased the easy-going Tarentines must have been with this mode of life, and how bitterly they must have cursed their own folly in sending for this terrible soldier from across the sea.

However, Pyrrhus did not care a straw what they thought. He sent his messengers out to the Samnites, and the other nations who were unfriendly to Rome, and stirred them up to join him in putting the Romans down. To the Romans, likewise, he sent to say that all he wanted was to settle the dispute between them and the Tarentines; to which the Romans, who were too shrewd to be deceived so easily, replied that they settled their disputes themselves.

A short while afterward, the Roman soldiers caught a spy whom Pyrrhus had sent to spy out their camp. Instead of putting him to death, as was usual, they led him all over the camp, showed him every thing, then sent him back to his master to tell what he had seen.

When Pyrrhus discovered that the Romans could neither be cheated nor frightened, he secretly admired them, but made ready to fight. The two armies met in a plain near the town of Heraclea, on the little River Liris. After the battle had lasted some time, the Roman general—LÆVINUS—thought the time had come to bring up his reserves. Up they came, all fresh men full of fight, and fell upon the Greeks, who staggered and gave way.

But Pyrrhus, seeing that all the Romans were now engaged, gave the signal for the elephants to charge. With trunks and tails erect, and with cas-

gles on their backs full of armed men, they ran forward, shaking the ground as they went. They were so well trained that they liked fighting as well as their masters, and would plunge into an enemy's rank and trample soldiers under their huge feet, or seize them with their trunks and whirl them into the air.

The Romans had never seen elephants before. When the enormous creatures charged them, they were smitten with fright, and a good many ran away without more ado. The horses, especially, were terrified by the sight of these monstrous animals, and galloped in every direction to get out of their way. In a few minutes the Romans were in helpless confusion, and the elephants were among them crushing them by the dozen, and spearing them with their tusks. Losing all hope of victory, they ran to the River Liris and contrived to make their escape across it.

Pyrrhus thus won the day. But when he walked over the battle-field and saw how many of his friends and soldiers had fallen, he turned to his officers, and cried: "One more such victory and I shall return to Epirus alone!" Some one showed him how all the Roman corpses lay with their face to the enemy. "Ah!" said he, "if the Romans were my soldiers I should conquer the world."

This is the Roman story, and you may believe it if you like. If Pyrrhus did say so, it was not very complimentary to his own soldiers, four thousand of whom had that day died for him.

After the battle, Pyrrhus resolved to try persuasion again. He sent to Rome one of his chief coun-

cilors, a man of wonderful learning and wisdom, whose name was CINEAS.

The day after Cineas arrived at Rome he knew the name of every Senator; so quickly did he learn, and so surprising was his memory. For each he had a pretty compliment; for their wives, a rich present of Grecian stuffs or jewelry. Then, when every one was talking of his wisdom and his generosity, he went to the Senate and proposed smoothly to make peace. His proposal was that neither Tarentum nor any of the old enemies of the Romans should be molested by them in future, that the Romans should give up all the land they had conquered, and become friends of King Pyrrhus.

These were not very good terms for the Romans; but Cineas had won the hearts of so many of the Senators, and Pyrrhus and his elephants seemed such terrible enemies, that many were for accepting them.

It was then that old Appius Claudius, who had been Censor thirty years before, declared that he must speak to the Senate. The old man was blind, and very infirm; his sons and his sons-in-law led him by the hand to his place in the Senate, and supported him while he spoke.

But feeble as his body was, the heart of that brave old noble had never been stronger than it was at that moment; he spoke such fiery words, he showed so truly the baseness and the cowardice of yielding to Pyrrhus, he called so loudly upon the Senate and the people to resist the invader to the last—that, then and there, without other argument

or delay, the Senate rejected the offers of Cineas, and bade him leave the city that very day.

Then the Romans sent an embassy to Pyrrhus to exchange prisoners. Three of the most famous Romans were chosen to go; the greatest of the three, CAIUS FABRICIUS. The story goes that Pyrrhus was so much struck by the wisdom of Fabricius that, seeing him poor, plainly dressed, and unused to fine living, he offered him rich presents and a high rank if he would enter his service. These offers the stern Roman firmly refused. He would neither leave his country, he said, nor accept favors from an enemy. Then, to try his courage, Pyrrhus had an elephant hidden behind a screen in the building where he met the Romans: at a signal, the elephant suddenly raised the screen and waved his trunk over Fabricius's head. But Fabricius did not start or show any sign of fear; he only smiled, and looked coolly at the huge animal, which quite convinced Pyrrhus that it was useless to try to corrupt or frighten such men as the Romans.

He admired Fabricius so much that he released all the Roman prisoners, and sent them home with him, on condition that Fabricius was to answer for their return if the war went on.

The war did go on, and soon after another battle was fought at a place called Asculum, and the Romans were beaten again. This time it was the Macedonian phalanx which gave Pyrrhus the victory. The phalanx was a solid mass of men, sixteen deep, all armed with spears; the men stood close together, and the spears of the rear ranks were

so long that they made a sort of cover for the men in front. When this phalanx charged, with all the spears bristling out in front, nothing could resist it; it rolled heavily over the Roman troops like a huge wave of the sea.

Still, though Pyrrhus won the victory, the Romans fought so well that he lost a large number of his best men; and when he counted them up, he cried bitterly as before, "One more such victory and I am undone!"

He soon found other reasons to regret that he had ever come to Italy. His allies broke faith with him and robbed him. Revolts broke out in his own country; and his friends at home wrote to him, begging him to return.

While he was in doubt how to act, some fellow—his name is not certain—went to Fabricius and offered to poison Pyrrhus. The noble Roman shrank with horror from the bare idea of such a crime, and sent off a messenger directly to Pyrrhus to put him on his guard against the murderer.

This message appeared so honorable to Pyrrhus that he set free all his Roman prisoners, freshly clothed at his cost, and soon afterward embarked on board ship and set sail for Sicily.

The Romans then continued the war with great vigor against their Italian foes. Several victories were won, and they were steadily making their way toward Tarentum, when all at once King Pyrrhus turned up again on the coast with his spearmen, and his horse, and his elephants.

The news cast the Romans into great dismay, for

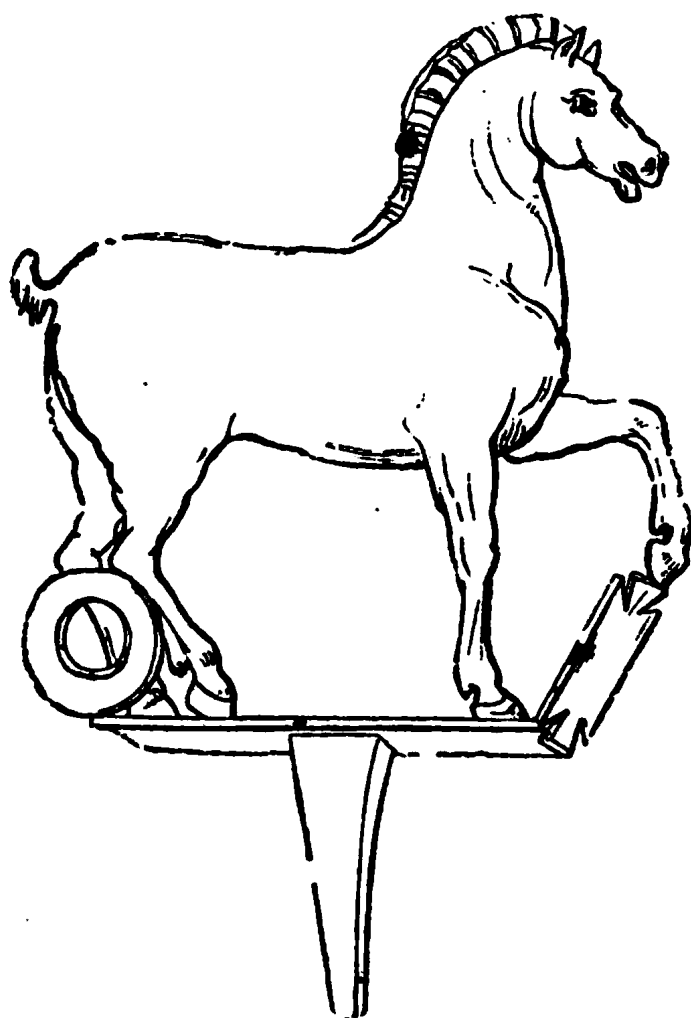
they were afraid of the brave and skillful Greek. Their fright was increased by a strange accident. In a thunder-storm a flash of lightning struck the clay statue of Jupiter on the Capitol and knocked off its head. What was most singular, the head couldn't be found any where. Greatly troubled by the event—which they supposed to be a sign of the gods' anger—the Romans went, as usual, to the augurs to ask where the head was.

The augurs consulted the gods, and made answer that if the people looked in a particular spot at the bottom of the river they would find the head.

A crowd of people ran to the spot at once, and good swimmers dived to the bottom, where, sure enough, they found the head. I shouldn't wonder if the augurs had put it there; or, as they were almost the only learned men at Rome, if they had calculated where a heavy body, like this large clay head, would fall if thrown from the Capitoline Hill.

Still the Romans were downhearted. The new Consul, CURIUS DENTATUS, was, happily, a man of great firmness and Roman virtue. In the olden time he had had the homestead law enforced, in spite of old Appius Claudius and the nobles, and had secured to every Roman a farm of four acres and a half. When the people wanted to reward him for this, and to give him three hundred acres for himself, he sternly refused, saying, that no man could want more than the four and a half, and that so long as he had a mess of pottage he asked for nothing. This old hero now raised an army and marched to meet Pyrrhus.

The latter was quite ready, and near a place called Beneventum a great battle was fought. Pyrrhus began the attack, but the ground was bad, and his heavy phalanxes were thrown into confusion. Then he ordered his elephants to charge. But this time the Romans were ready for them. As they approached, every Roman threw a fire-ball of flax and rosin at their heads. Elephants are terribly afraid of fire; these fire-balls drove them wild, and they turned and charged their own friends. Thus



THE OLD ROMAN STANDARD.

the Roman standard triumphed, and the battle was won by the Romans.

This defeat so disgusted Pyrrhus that he instantly embarked, and returned home. He could not remain

quiet, however. Two or three years afterward, the restless King made war on some of his Greek neighbors, and laid siege to Argos. In the attack upon the place, he raised his sword to kill an Argive who stood in his way; but the mother of the man seeing her son's danger from a window, threw a heavy stone upon Pyrrhus, and dashed his brains out.

After he went away, the Romans made short work with his Italian allies. Some were beaten in war; others submitted quietly: all became subject to Rome. As for poor, idle, rich Tarentum, the Romans took away its fleet, dismantled its forts, and made the people pay for a guard of Roman soldiers to keep them in order.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE FIRST WAR WITH CARTHAGE.

THE Romans had now conquered all their southern neighbors in Italy. Of their old enemies none had strength left to face them.

But the old soldiers who had fought with the Samnites, and with the Tarentines, and with Pyrrhus, could not bear the idea of peace. They growled to each other as they met in the Forum, "Whom shall we get to fight with us next?" Some one said he thought Carthage would do; and the old soldiers cried: Yes, they would try Carthage.

CARTHAGE was a rich and mighty nation of North Africa. Its people were Phœnicians, and had come from the neighborhood of the country of the Jews: they were skillful workmen, and enterprising traders. Their navy was the largest in the world. Merchant ships from Carthage sailed to every port in the Mediterranean. Some roved into the Black Sea, and bought and sold with the wild races on its shores. Others let the east wind drive them through the straits of Gibraltar, and crept round the western coast of Spain, Portugal, and France, even as far as the isles of the savages who were called Britons. Wherever there was money to be made, there the merchants of Carthage were sure to be found, trafficking, and bartering, and building up great fortunes.



COIN OF CARTHAGE.

There were at Carthage men who were wise and brave, as well as shrewd. I do not know where to look at this time for greater soldiers, or greater statesmen than some of those who opposed Rome in the war which I am going to describe.

There was no quarrel between Rome and Carthage. On the contrary, for many many years the two nations had been friends and allies. But for this the old Roman soldiers did not care a straw. Fighting was what they wanted; whether with friends or enemies it mattered very little: and they soon found an excuse for going to war with Carthage.

At Messana in Sicily there was gathered at this time a band of robbers called Mamertines. These robbers annoyed the Carthaginians who were in Sicily; and from Carthage word came to put them down. The Mamertines begged for help from the Romans.

Now the Romans were not slow to put down robbers in Italy, and they knew that the Carthaginians were quite right in getting rid of the Mamertines. So when the latter sent to Rome to beg for

help, the Roman Senate would not listen to them, and bade them begone.

But the old soldiers, who were dying to get a chance to fight, assembled in the Forum, and bawled all day long that Rome ought to help the Mamertines. The Consuls were only too willing to let them have their way; and in the end the Senate too, being very weak in such matters, gave its consent, and ordered C. CLAUDIUS to Messana.

But when Claudius tried to transport his army over into Sicily in boats, the Carthaginians attacked them, sunk several of the boats, and made many prisoners. These the Carthaginian leader, HANNO, sent back to Claudius, saying that he had no cause of quarrel with Rome, but that the Romans must not interfere with him.

Claudius made answer that he would rescue the Mamertines in spite of Carthage. Upon which Hanno, who was a man of great spirit and very proud of the naval power of Carthage, sent word that since that was the mind of the Romans, he would so thoroughly sweep them from the sea that they should not be able even to wash their hands in it.

Claudius crossed into Sicily, notwithstanding, and sent word to Hanno that if he would meet him in a friendly way, their dispute might perhaps be adjusted without fighting. Trusting in the honor of the Roman, Hanno went; and Claudius basely seized him, and kept him a prisoner. He offered at last to let him go, if he would march away from Messana with his army; and to this Hanno agreed, being unable to help himself.

It was a bad business for him. For when he went back to Carthage, and told what he had done, the Senate and the people were so enraged at his having let the Romans get into Messana, that they crucified him as a warning to their other generals.

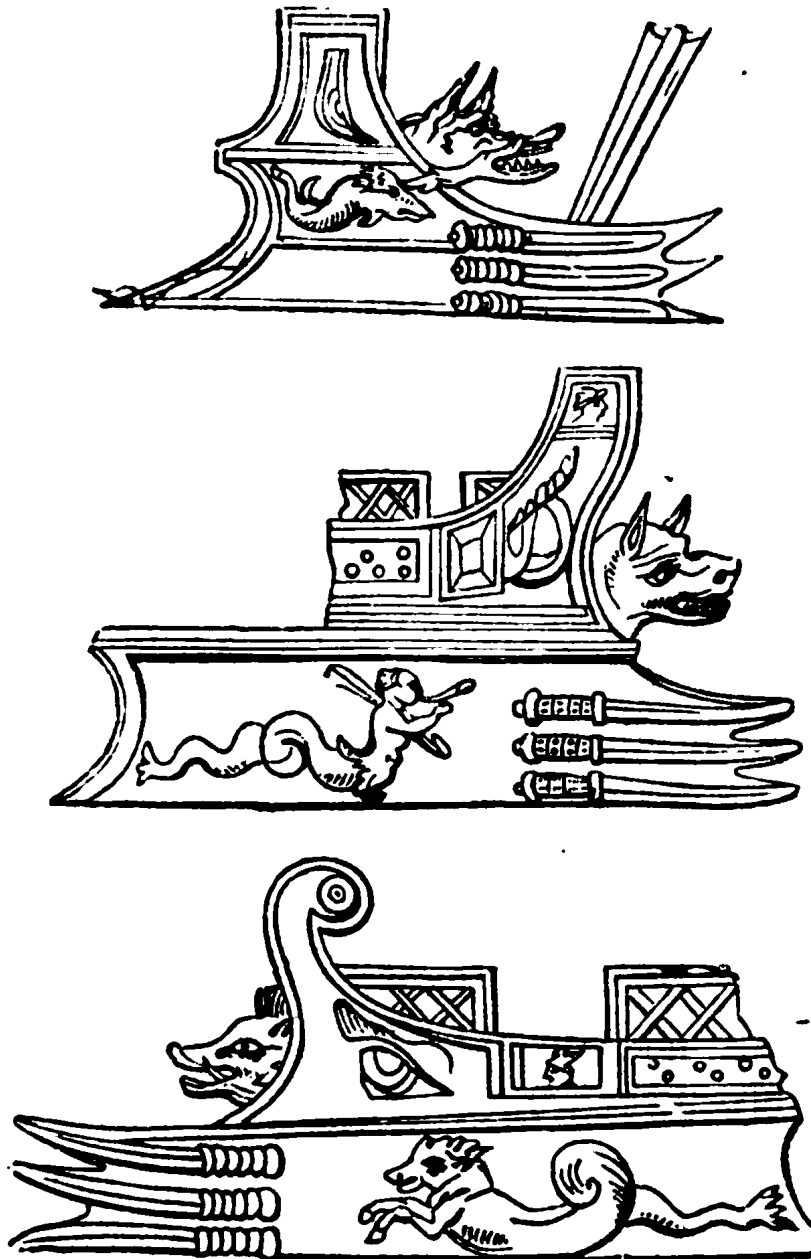
Then the war began in earnest. The Romans overran the whole of Sicily, most of which belonged to Carthage. City after city fell into their hands, and there was no end to the rich booty they captured, or the poor people they seized and sold as slaves. On sea, the Carthaginians were the strongest of the two; they laid waste all the towns and villages on the coast, and snapped up every Roman ship which ventured to put to sea.

The Romans soon saw that, if they did not want to be beaten, they must have ships as strong and as large as those of Carthage. How to build them was the question; for the Romans were not fond of sea-faring and trading, like the Carthaginians, and there was not in all Italy a man who knew how to build a ship of war.

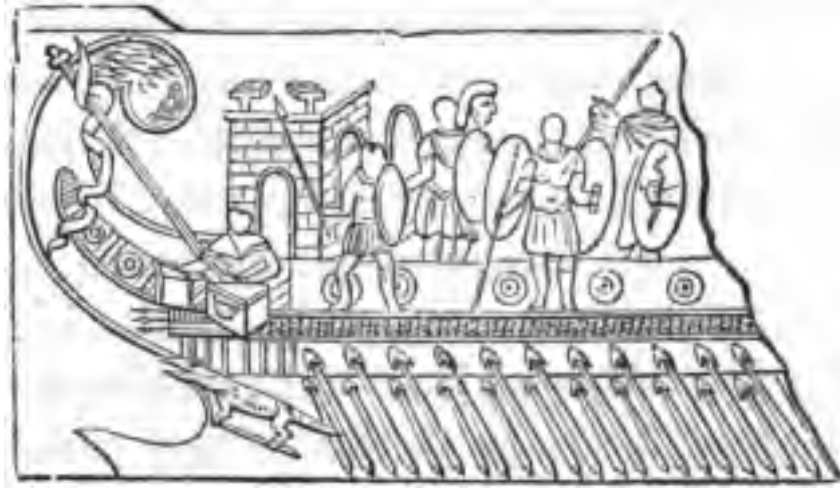
Haply, a Carthaginian man-of-war — quinqueremes they were called, on account of their having five rows of oars placed, one above another, like the seats in a theatre—had lately run aground on the coast. The hulk was taken to Rome, and the boat-builders, one and all, set to work to build vessels like it. With such vigor was the building carried on, that in sixty days after the timber was felled, one hundred quinqueremes and thirty smaller craft were launched. To teach the men how to row, while the ships were being built, benches were arranged on

land in the same order as they stood on board ship, and all day long the future sailors were trained to tug at the oars from these benches, until they could pull strongly and all together.

These Roman ships were, of course, very different from ours. They had a mast and sails; but their oars, of which they had a prodigious number, were their chief reliance. Their bows were armed with an iron beak, very strong and pointed; and the great object of the helmsman at sea fights



SHIPS' BEAKS.



A ROMAN SHIP.

was to run this beak against the side of the enemy's ship, so as to sink her. On the decks of the ship stood the fighting men, armed with spears and darts, which they hurled at the sailors in the enemy's vessels.

But besides these weapons the Romans provided their ships of war with a sort of draw-bridge, which hung to a mast near the bow. When they drew near an enemy's ship, this bridge was let down ; it fell with a crash, and fastened itself, by means of a spike at its end, to the enemy's deck ; and down the bridge the fighting men ran to board.

As soon as these ships were equipped and manned they put to sea in search of the enemy. The Carthaginians were very glad to see them, for they made sure they would easily beat such raw sailors as the Romans ; and they laughed a good deal at the queer-looking concerns which were strung up in the bows of the Roman vessels.

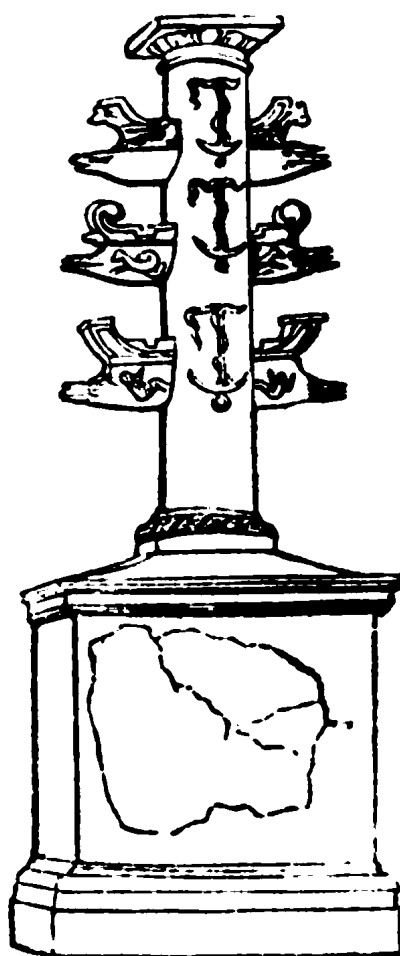
But when the fight began, they did not laugh quite so much ; for as soon as the Romans got within reach of a Carthaginian ship, the queer-looking concerns

came down with a thump on its deck, the spike stuck fast, and down the draw-bridge poured the Romans, covering themselves with their shields. There was very little chance for the Carthaginians after the Romans had once got on board their vessels. And after the Carthaginian leader had lost in this way fifty ships and ten thousand men, he signaled his fleet to escape as fast as they could.

This was the first naval victory the Romans ever won, and they were very proud of it. In honor of the day and of the Consul DULIUS, who commanded the fleet, they set up in the Forum a fine column, bristling with ships' beaks, of which you may still see a very ancient copy in the Capitol at Rome.

For four years after this the war went on in Sicily, the Romans having generally the best of it. To put an end to Carthage, they at last resolved to send an army into Africa.

An immense fleet, with a great army on board, sailed accordingly, under the Consuls, of whom the famous REGULUS was one. The Carthaginians tried to stop them as they passed the end of Sicily, but Regulus sunk a large number of their ships, put the others to flight, and passed on. Away the Roman men-of-war went, the oars bending at every stroke, and the soldiers eager to see the strange



DULIUS'S COLUMN.

country over the sea, where they had heard there were huge serpents acres long, and monsters without heads, and wild men and women covered with hair, in the woods.

When they landed, they saw very few of these wonderful creatures, as you may imagine, but they found—what suited them much better—rich fields and splendid cities, pleasant country houses, ripe orchards, and fat vineyards. Upon these Regulus let loose his men ; who, liking nothing better, fell to robbing and destroying and burning with a fine relish. Terrible havoc these rude soldiers soon made in this lovely country, and very little of its wealth and plenty remained after a few weeks of their mischievous work.

As for the poor Carthaginians, they rushed in throngs to the city of Carthage, and shut themselves up there, quaking and groaning. No man was there, it seems, who was able to lead them against the Romans. And when they sent an humble message to Regulus, begging for peace, he haughtily bade them submit to be the slaves of the Romans, or take the consequences.

But sore as their distress was, the Senators of Carthage had some spirit left. They said they would never be the slaves of Rome. As they had no leader at home who was bold and skillful enough to oppose Regulus, they sent abroad for one ; and very soon they found a Greek named XANTIPPUS, who was a soldier of great experience, and not at all afraid of the Romans.

Him they brought to Carthage, and gave him the

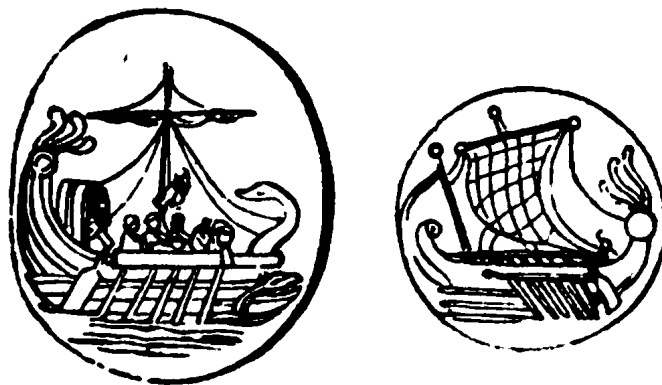
command of their armies. Then having, as their barbarous custom was, thrust their fairest children into a blazing fire before the horrid statue of Moloch, they marched out to fight Regulus with their bravest soldiers, their fleetest horses, and their strongest elephants.

The Romans fought well, as usual, but they were beaten; and Regulus, with five hundred of his best men, was taken prisoner and led in chains to Carthage. There was plenty of feasting and merry-making, you may be sure, in the crowded city, on the day when the prisoners came in; and many a brave Roman was roasted alive before the statue of Moloch in honor of the victory.

At Rome, the people were enraged at the news of the defeat of Regulus. With all haste they built another great fleet and sent it away southward; but a storm overtook it, and destroyed it utterly. For



ROMAN VESSELS.



miles and miles the shore was covered with the dead bodies of the drowned Romans, and the broken timbers of the ships.

It was a dreadful blow to the Romans, but they bore it stoutly, and set about building another fleet at once. Within three months it was launched, and sailed away to Africa. For a short while it cruised, doing some mischief to the Carthaginian coast villages; but before it fought a battle, a storm caught it too, and shattered it to pieces.

This heavy disaster threw the Romans into low spirits. It gave heart to the Carthaginians, who now swept the seas triumphantly, and began to boast once more that the Romans should not be able to send so much as a cockle-shell to sea.

In Sicily, the war went on as before, the Carthaginians having their forts, and the Romans theirs, and each trying to drive the other out of the island. At last the Carthaginian general, having received a number of elephants from home, made a furious attack on the Romans in their stronghold at Panormus. Unluckily for him, the Romans had learned in the war with Pyrrhus how to deal with elephants. The Roman leader, CÆCILIUS METELLUS, bade his

soldiers let the men alone, but aim all their spears and darts at the trunks of the elephants. They aimed so many and so well that the huge brutes were all wounded in a few minutes; and maddened by pain, turned furiously on their friends, plowed up the Carthaginian ranks, and threw the whole army into confusion. Then Metellus, seizing the right moment, rushed out of his stronghold with his best troops and finished the enemy.

Many of the elephants were taken alive and sent to Rome, where they figured in the triumph of Metellus, and were afterward hunted down in the Forum by the people.

It was now the turn of the Romans to boast, and of the Carthaginians to droop. Many of their greatest nobles had been taken prisoners by Metellus. To recover these, a message was sent to Rome offering to release a like number of Roman prisoners in exchange for them. With the messengers was sent old Regulus, who had now been five years a prisoner in a dreary dungeon under the burning sun of Africa, and whose body was wasted and strength gone. He was one of those whom the Carthaginians offered to set free in exchange for their captured nobles.

As the messengers supposed that he would, of course, be very anxious to get free once more, they bade him speak to the Roman Senate. But the weak and battered old man was as strong of heart as ever; he besought his countrymen not to release one single prisoner. Rome, he said, could spare her sons better than Carthage; and as for himself, he was a wretched, broken-down old man, who had but

a short time to live, and was not by any means worth the Carthaginian nobles for whom they proposed to exchange him.

The Carthaginian messengers were enraged at this speech of his, and threatened him with all manner of vengeance. His friends crowded round him, and implored him to save himself. His wife and his children clung to his skirts, and hung round his neck, weeping and beseeching him not to leave them again.

But he was firm as a rock. It was for the good of Rome that he should not be set free, he said; and neither threats nor prayers would make him say the contrary. So the Senate, guided by his advice, refused to exchange prisoners, and bade the messengers go home; and with them went brave old Regulus, away to his death.

They say that the Carthaginians were so furious at his conduct that they put him to death with frightful tortures; and that the Romans avenged him by inflicting equal cruelties on two of the Carthaginian prisoners. But this is not likely. You may believe that Regulus died of old age and disease in prison at Carthage; and that no Carthaginians were tortured to death at Rome.

What with the bold words of Regulus, and what with the victory of Metellus, the Romans took heart again, and built another great fleet, and sent it to sea, under CLAUDIUS PULCHER.

This Claudius was the son of blind Appius Claudius, and was quite as headstrong but not nearly as wise as his father. Just as he was about to give battle to the Carthaginian fleet, the augurs went to

him with very blank faces, and said that the sacred chickens refused to eat, which, as you remember, was regarded as a very bad sign.

“Won’t eat!” cried Claudius, angrily; “then they shall drink.” And he took the hen-coop and flung it into the sea.

Apart from the cruelty of drowning the fowls, you will not be inclined to think much the worse of him on this account. But the act no doubt discouraged the Roman sailors and soldiers, who were as much shocked as our sailors and soldiers would be nowadays, if a Commodore were to make a parade of throwing the Bible overboard before a battle.

So it turned out. For when the battle began, the Carthaginian chief, ADHERBAL, very quickly sunk or captured most of the Roman ships, and Claudius was lucky in being able to row out of danger himself.

Close on the heels of this defeat, another Roman fleet, which had been fitted out after Appius had sailed, was overtaken by a storm and wrecked. This was the fourth fleet lost since the war began. An unlucky business this sea-fighting.

But the Romans were never so great as when calamity pressed on them. They never lost heart or hope. As the state had no more money left, the Consuls called on rich men to come to its aid. There was no hanging back either among the nobles or among the people. Each gave according to his means; some a small sum, others a larger; the richest of all fitted out ships of war, and armed and equipped them at their own expense. And so, every

man straining his means to the utmost, in a wonderfully short space of time a fifth fleet was afloat.

When the Carthaginians learned what had been done at Rome, they too fitted out a strong fleet, and sent it to sea under the command of HANNO, one of their best leaders. His orders were to sail to Sicily, and there to take on board the great Carthaginian general HAMILCAR BARCA, who had been on that island for some years, fighting with the Romans. The idea at Carthage was, that if Hamilcar and his old tried troops were joined with the men under Hanno, there would be no resisting them, and Rome would be obliged to yield. And it was, no doubt, a very good idea.

But, as ill-luck would have it, just as Hanno was sailing to Eryx, where Hamilcar was, the Roman fleet hove in sight, the sailors rowing might and main to get between the Carthaginians and the land. So stoutly did they pull, bending the oars at every stroke, that before Hanno could help himself he was cut off from the shore and forced to fight.

His ships were not well manned, the Carthaginians having counted on Hamilcar's men to fill them. The Roman ships, on the contrary, were excellent of their kind; and every man on board knew that if this fleet were destroyed it would be very hard indeed to find another. So you will not be surprised to learn that the Carthaginians were completely beaten, many of their ships taken, others sunk, and only a few suffered to escape.

The war had now lasted twenty-two years, and Carthage was quite exhausted. This last defeat

broke her spirit, and a message was sent to Rome to beg for peace. Rome was not in a very vigorous state, as you know ; but the Romans were resolved to make no peace without gaining some advantage. They proposed very hard terms to Carthage ; among other things, they insisted on being paid twenty-five thousand six hundred pounds of silver every year for ten years.

It was a heavy tribute to pay ; but Hamilcar and the best men of Carthage were convinced that, for the present, nothing better could be done, and a peace was accordingly made on these terms.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE BREATHING-TIME.

ROME and Carthage liked each other none the better for the peace. Very soon after it was made the Romans repented of it, thinking that they had let Carthage escape too cheaply; and the first chance they had they began to talk of war again.

When the wolf wanted to eat the lamb, he accused it of troubling the water of the stream at which he drank. The Roman wolves growled that the Carthaginians had troubled their ships, and had sent a fleet to the coast of Italy to threaten Rome. And on these pretenses—the old soldiers, you may be sure, being at the bottom of the business—war was declared again.

But Carthage was in no humor to fight. Her slaves had just rebelled, her armies were weak, her purse was empty, her trade had not yet recovered from the blight of the last war. So the Senate of Carthage sent to Rome to beg for peace. The Romans demanded that more silver should be paid them—ninety-six thousand pounds the wolves asked—and that the island of Sardinia should become subject to Rome. Carthage sullenly agreed to these harsh terms.

But in the African city there was many a stout heart that swelled, and many a strong hand

that trembled with rage at the insolence of Rome. Among the proud nobles of Carthage not one but promised himself to take terrible vengeance for these Roman insults when his country should have regained her strength. Fiercest of all, though very silent and outwardly quiet, was brave Hamilcar Barca, who had fought the Romans in Sicily, and but for whose absence the last battle might have been won by the Carthaginians.

He was now fitting out an expedition against Spain. Not so much that he wanted to conquer the Spaniards, but that he saw, afar off, that the rude warriors of Spain and Gaul were the proper men to help Carthage in the future tussle with Rome, and he wanted to secure them beforehand.

The ships were ready and the men mustered on the shore. Before sailing, Hamilcar offered sacrifice to the gods as usual; and when the altar was smoking with the blood of the victim, he bade his officers stand aside, and called his son HANNIBAL.

He was a little boy nine years old; but he raised himself erect, and his eye flashed, when his father asked him if he would go with him to Spain?

“Ay, gladly, father, will I go, if you will take me.”

Then his father led him to the altar, bade him stretch his hand over it, as the custom of the ancients was when they took an oath, and swear that “he would never, to his dying day, be a friend to the Romans.” Young Hannibal swore, and deep into his young heart the oath sank; and from that hour all his thoughts were how he could fulfill it—

how he could prove most surely that he was the deadly foe of Rome.

Hamilcar then crossed over into Spain, and began to overrun the country.

He had hardly crossed the sea when the Roman wolves began to growl again, and demand more money from Carthage, or else, they said, they would declare war. Ten of the chief nobles of Carthage went to Rome—grave, white-haired, venerable old men—and the wisest of them, whose name was HANNO, said some things to the Senate that must have made that body feel somewhat ashamed. In fine, he said that if nothing but war would satisfy the Romans, well and good; but if so, let them give back Sicily and Sardinia, which were given by Carthage as the price of peace.

The Romans said they would rather not; and I dare say they laughed, and prayed the Carthaginians to believe that all their talk about war was only a joke. To satisfy them the better, the Temple of Janus, which, the story said, had always been open since the days of Numa, was now shut, as a sign that the peace was really serious.

It did not long remain shut, for the Romans soon contrived to pick a quarrel with another of their neighbors, the Queen of the Illyrians, whose kingdom lay to the north of the realm of their old friend Pyrrhus. The Queen just served to amuse the soldiers for a short while; she was soon overcome, and forced to pay tribute.

The new province of Sardinia also gave the old soldiers a chance; for the islanders rebelling, REGU-

LUS, the son of the old Consul, crossed over with an army, killed a few of them, and frightened the others into quiet.

Very soon, however, they had more serious enemies to meet. After many years of rest, the Gauls once more began to covet the rich fields and splendid cities of the Romans. Those who lived nearest to Rome sent to their cousins across the Alps—in the country which is now called France—to ask would they join them in a swoop on the Roman country? And they, mightily excited at the idea, answered, With pleasure. So they began, each tribe in its own country, to sharpen their broadswords and train their horses for the campaign.

News of all these doings came quickly enough to Rome, and great was the terror among the faint-hearted. Well did the old men remember the stories they had heard in their youth of the frightful wars with the Gauls long long before, of brave King Brennus, and of his fierce, yellow-haired, giant warriors. Women shuddered and children grew pale as they listened to the tales of that dreadful day at the River Allia, and of the burning of Rome.

Whiter still grew their cheeks, and even many a bold man stood still and thought, when, one stormy night, the lightning flashed and struck the Capitol at Rome. To the augurs the people went, as usual, and bade them quick see what the Sibylline Books said. The books said:

“When the lightning shall strike the Capitol, beware, O Romans! for the race of the Gauls and the Greeks shall dwell in the Forum.”

This seemed to be a pretty shrewd guess for the books, which were not any thing very wonderful as guessers, generally speaking; but, this time, the Consuls and the nobles took counsel together, and made up their minds to cheat the gods. It was easy enough. They took two Gauls, a man and a woman; and two Greeks, a man and a woman also, and buried them alive in the Forum. Then they said the prophecy was fulfilled, for the Gauls and the Greeks dwelt in the Forum.

Their minds eased by this cruel act, forth the armies marched to meet the Gauls. They missed them at first, and the yellow-haired warriors came pouring across the mountains in their old way, ravaging the country, plundering and burning as far as Clusium, in Etruria. Loaded with booty, they turned back from Clusium to go home. But the Romans were on their track.

On one side, L. ÆMILIUS the Consul, on another, Regulus, marched to meet them, and soon hemmed them in. A battle was fought, very long and bloody, and Regulus was killed; but the Gauls were totally routed, and Æmilius returned to Rome with chests full of gold chains that he had taken from the necks of the slaughtered warriors.

Still the Romans were not satisfied, and year after year they sent armies into the country of the Gauls, to punish them and subdue them. One of these armies was led by one of Rome's greatest generals, FLAMINIUS NEPOS. He was a man of great boldness and confidence in himself. Never doubted or feared, but went straight to his point over barriers

and obstacles, without scruple or delay. A strong friend to the people, withal, and bitterly hated by the nobles.

While he was away, in the Gaulish country north of the mountains, the nobles grew jealous of him, and laid a plot to have him recalled. They pretended they had seen awful signs of the gods' wrath, such as three moons at once in the sky, and a river flowing with blood. And the augurs being quite ready to certify that the meaning of these signs was that Flaminius ought to return, a letter was sent to the army with orders to that effect.

Flaminius was just going to fight a battle when he got the letter. He guessed what it meant: so he laid it aside, and said he would read it after the battle. Then he gave the word and the fight began. The Gauls were defeated, and the Romans won a great victory. Then Flaminius opened the letter, and finding that he had guessed truly, said that the gods didn't appear to know much about what was going on in the world, or else how would he have won the battle?

So he took no notice of the letter or of the awful signs that had been seen at Rome, and went on ravaging the Gaulish country, and gaining vast quantities of booty. When the season was over, he returned to Rome. The Senate and nobles were so enraged with him that they would not consent to his having a triumph; but the people were of quite another mind, and Flaminius triumphed in the usual way.

Sensible a man as he was, and well as he under-

stood the trickeries of the augurs, he could not always withstand them. For, a couple of years afterward, when he was chosen master of the horse to MINUCIUS RUFUS, he was obliged to resign by a ridiculous accident. At the moment of his appointment a mouse squeaked, and the augurs, with the gravest faces in the world, said that this was a bad sign, and new men must be chosen.

He was chosen Censor afterward, and the mice in the neighborhood having kept quiet, he was allowed to perform the duties of his office. It was he who built the great road to Ariminum, over which you still travel when you go from Rome to Rimini; likewise the Flaminian Circus in the Field of Mars, where horse-races and games were held. A second Appius, in this respect.

All this while the Carthaginians had been over-running Spain and conquering province after province. After nine years' war, Hamilcar was killed in a battle with the natives on the border of the River Tagus; and his son-in-law, HASDRUBAL, succeeded to the command. He, too, fought and conquered, and spread the power of Carthage over new tracts of country. For nine years he led the Carthaginians with great skill and success, till a slave, whose master he had put to death, murdered him in his tent. Then the army called for young Hannibal to lead them.

He fought with still better fortune than his father and his brother-in-law, and soon subdued nearly the whole of Southern Spain.

The great city of Saguntum, near the southeast-

ern corner of Spain, now began to fear that it too would be attacked. It sent to Rome, and begged for the protection of the Romans. They gave it at once, and messengers were sent to Carthage and to Hannibal to say that he must not on any account molest Saguntum.

The messengers said, when they returned to Rome, that Hannibal had eyed them strangely, and spoken uncivil words.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HANNIBAL.

HANNIBAL was now twenty-six years of age. A man of wonderful strength and activity; the best swordsman and the best rider in the Carthaginian army. He fared as hardly as his common soldiers; had no regular meals, and rarely went to bed; but ate when he chanced to find himself hungry, and, when he wanted sleep, lay down on the ground in his cloak wherever he happened to be. Young as he was, he was one of the most able generals that ever lived: cool, prompt, energetic; never off his guard, never weary; fertile in schemes, swift in action; as daring as prudent; and taking no thought for any thing but how to injure Rome, and how to wreak his vengeance on the hated Roman people.

Little he cared for the message the Senate sent him; but straightway, when his army was ready, laid siege to Saguntum. It is now a poor place, where travelers seldom stop, and goes by the name of Murviedro; but then it was a large and rich city, peopled by brave men, who were strong friends of the Romans.

The Saguntines closed their gates, and lined their walls and filled their towers with fighting men; and when first the Carthaginians came near, they were

received so warmly that they soon fell back. The Saguntines had a weapon which was quite new to their enemies: a sort of long spear made of fir with an iron head, and wrapped round the middle with tow smeared with pitch. Before they threw this spear, they set fire to the tow; as it flew through the air the pitched tow blazed up, and when it struck a man, it burned so fiercely that he was half roasted before he could draw it out. You will find, if you read the history of South America, that burning arrows were often used in the same manner in the Spanish wars there.



A BATTERING-RAM.

For all these fiery spears, and the bravery of the Saguntines to boot, Hannibal drove his battering-rams close to the walls of the city, and battered

down piece after piece of the wall, and tower after tower, his spearmen showering darts over the wall the whole time, until at last the Saguntines were overcome. They made a great bonfire in their market-place, and the chief men threw into it their money, their jewels, and whatever they had that was precious; then, after one last bloody struggle, they flung themselves into the flames, and were burned to death in scores.

It was so rich a town that, notwithstanding the money and treasure that had been burned, Hannibal found enough left to repay him for all his pains. Heaps and heaps of rich stuffs and money were divided among the soldiers; and they sat themselves down among the ruins to rest a while after the fatigue of the siege.

When the Romans heard that Saguntum had been taken, they sent to Carthage again to inquire what these things meant. The Carthaginians appearing to shuffle in their answers, one of the Roman messengers, FABIVS, gathered a fold of his toga in each hand, and cried, "Here is war, and here is peace—which will ye have?"

The Carthaginians gruffly said, whichever he liked.

"Then," said Fabius, "I offer you war!" And he returned home, and bade the people prepare for a new war with Carthage.

Hannibal, meanwhile, was making ready for greater deeds than the capture of Saguntum. One night as he slept, he dreamed that he saw before him all the gods of Carthage sitting in awful grandeur on their thrones, and that they bade him invade Italy.

He obeyed, in his dream; and one of the chief gods, who went with him, warned him not to look behind. He did look, however, and he beheld a monstrous creature, seemingly bristling with hideous snakes, rush furiously over trees and houses and cities, crushing them as it went, and laying the whole country waste. Then the god warned him again, saying, "This is a sign of the desolation of Italy. See thou go straight forward on thy way, and look not behind." And he awoke and set his army in motion.

Over the Ebro (then called Iberus) and the Pyrenees, then through the beautiful plains of Southern Gaul—the loveliest country in the world—he led his men: thousands of wild Numidians on horseback without saddle or bridle, and dashing hither and thither like the wind; tens of thousands of fierce African foot-soldiers, all in white linen coats with scarlet borders; and a strong array of huge elephants, each with his castle on his back. He marched on, and on, and on, over mountain and river and plain, till he came to the great River Rhone, which flows down to the Mediterranean from the Alps.

Here the native Gauls tried to stop him, and gathered in great numbers on the opposite bank, brandishing their spears, and singing their war songs. But with them Hannibal made short work. A few of his best men crossed the river higher up, and fell on the Gauls in the rear; then Hannibal gave the word to launch the boats. He was very soon across, and scattered the Gauls like dust.

He made his horses swim across; but when it came to the turn of the elephants, they would not enter the boats or put a foot into the water. To get them across Hannibal had large rafts made of strong timber placed crosswise; these he covered with earth and stones and branches of trees, till they looked like solid ground. The elephants were then enticed upon them, and the rafts cut adrift and towed over. In this way all the huge animals were carried to the other side.

The Roman general, SCIPIO, had sailed from Italy to the mouth of the Rhone to meet him; but he gave the Romans the slip, and marched on to the foot of the Alps.

The Alps, as you know, are a ridge of huge mountains, like the Rocky Mountains in the West, very tall and very rugged. To this day it is a terrible business to climb some of them, though there are roads now over which the stage crosses. In Hannibal's time there were no roads, and the mountains were wild and forbidding. From January to December the snow lay upon their tops, and the ice hid in the valleys. In some places the cliffs rose straight upright for hundreds of feet. In others, foaming torrents rushed down through the clefts and valleys, and barred the way. In other places again, where the rise seemed gradual and easy, you came suddenly upon a lofty crag covered with snow, from which, every now and then, immense masses of ice toppled over, and rolled into the plain beneath with a noise like thunder.

It seemed almost impossible to cross these great

mountains with an army. But Hannibal had made his mind up: cross he would, no matter what the difficulty or the danger. So, with some Gaulish guides to lead the way, he began the toilsome march about the end of October.

It was terrible work for men bred under the scorching sun of Africa; and many of Hannibal's best soldiers lay down in the snow, and died by the wayside. Then, in the midst of the weary journey, the treacherous Gauls, seeing a fine chance to plunder, fell upon the Carthaginians in the narrow passes, and worried them without mercy. Hannibal had to stop his march, and fight battle after battle with these rough mountaineers, before they learned to fear him.

At last, on the ninth day, the army reached the top of the Alps. The worst half of the work was done. But it was colder than ever. The snow lay several feet deep on the ground. The elephants, unused to such cold, died one after another; and the soldiers, wearied out by fatigue, declared positively they would not stir another step.

Then Hannibal, pointing to the plain which glistened far away under their feet, cried, "Yonder plain is Italy, a country teeming with wine, and oil, and corn; and yonder lies the road to Rome. Have ye marched this far, and will ye hang back now?"

And the soldiers, fired by the sight and by the thought that they might soon be plundering the great and rich city of Rome, cried in reply, "We will go!" On they marched downward. Stopping here and there to shovel away the enormous snow-

drifts and fallen avalanches. Fighting stray battles with the mischievous Gauls, who hung on their skirts. But leaving to the winds and snows of heaven to bury the hundreds and hundreds of poor fellows who sank down exhausted on the mountain side, and were soon cold and stiff. Over twenty thousand there were—brave stout men—who began that dreadful ascent, and never set foot on the sunny plains on the other side.

But Hannibal did not stop to count the dead men. On he marched, brushing back a few Romans who tried to stop him at the River Ticinus, and encamping at last in the heart of that part of the Gaulish country which is now called Lombardy.

The Romans were ready for him. They had been waiting for some time, and now the two Consuls joined their armies together, and marched to the bank of the little River Trebia, not far from the city of Placentia. To the same place marched Hannibal as fast as he could, as eager for the fight as the Romans.

The way it began was this. Very early in the morning Hannibal sent his Numidian horsemen to harass the Romans, giving them private orders to run away when they were attacked. They did so; and the Roman general, who was the Consul SEMPRONIUS, thinking that he would easily beat such cowards, gave the word for the whole army to follow in pursuit across the river.

Into the Trebia they dashed, foot and horse. There is seldom any water there now; but at the time I speak of, it was a shallow stream, half filled

with ice and freshly-fallen snow. The Romans were nearly frozen when they reached the other side, and it was so early in the morning that they had not breakfasted.

Hannibal had roused his whole army very early that morning, and made every man warm himself at the bivouac fires, eat a hearty meal, and oil his joints. Then when the Romans were fairly across, he ordered the charge. So stiff and benumbed with cold were the Romans that they could not fight as usual; and when Hannibal's brother, who had lain in ambush with two thousand choice men, fell upon them in the rear, they gave up the contest and turned to fly. After them rushed Hannibal and his men, slaughtering them by the hundred, until a feeble remnant recrossed the river, and shut themselves up in Placentia.

After this victory Hannibal resolved to remain quiet till the warm weather. It was so piercingly cold that most of his remaining elephants and many of his fiery horses from Africa had died; and the men were glad enough to lie idle for a few weeks, feasting at the cost of their good friends the Gauls, in whose country they were.

The Gauls were not so well pleased at this as the strangers; and I am not surprised at it. They grumbled to each other, and said that their Carthaginian friends were as ravenous as their Roman enemies—that they ate up the fruit of the land like locusts. The Carthaginian soldiers didn't mind them in the least; but Hannibal, who knew perfectly well that the Gauls had a short and speedy

way of revenging themselves, and who remembered the fate of his brother-in-law in Spain, took great pains to protect his own life.

He used to go about the camp in all sorts of disguises. One day he wore a gray wig, and walked slowly with a stick, so that the story should go abroad that Hannibal was an old man. Another day he put on a red wig and fine clothes; and the talk among the Gauls was that the general was a coxcomb with red hair. Again, he would appear in his usual dress, walking or riding as briskly as he was wont. And in this way, if the Gauls really wanted to murder him, they were foiled, from the simple reason that they could not agree which was the real Hannibal.

Meanwhile at Rome, the stupid augurs were hard at work frightening the people with the most absurd stories. They said that a baby six months old had been heard to cry in the Forum, "*Io triumphe*," which meant something like Hip! hip! hurrah!—that an enterprising ox had walked to the third story of a private house, and stepped out of the window, with reckless disregard of its own bones—that ships had been seen sailing across the sky—that wolves had taken a fancy to wear swords, with much more rubbish of the same kind.

It was far worse, and the augurs never in their lives heard of such awful wonders as appeared, when the people made their brave champion Flaminius Consul in spite of the nobles. They swore they saw spears fall from heaven with private messages from the gods; goats turned into sheep, and cocks into

hens; the sky cleft open from side to side, and the sun and moon fighting tooth and nail, as they said, just like man and wife. My opinion is, that the meaning of all this nonsense was that the augurs and nobles wanted to drive stout Flaminius into resigning his office, as they had done once before. Happily for him he did not give them a chance; for, as soon as he was elected, he said the proper place for him was the post of danger, and he went off to the army.

With the early spring Hannibal crossed the Apennines, and poured his men into the rich plains of Etruria. After him marched the Consuls, Flaminius being particularly anxious to fight, and, as usual, never doubting for a moment but he would win the day. But Hannibal was too cunning for him. In the heat of the chase Flaminius hurried into the valley on the border of Lake Thrasymene. A thick mist hung over the lake and its shores, so dense that the Romans could hardly see each other. Still Flaminius pressed on, making sure that he would soon catch Hannibal.

He did catch him, indeed, but not where he expected; for the cunning Carthaginian had scattered his men on the heights above the Romans, and above the mist; so that when the Consul and his men were entangled in their march down below, down rushed Hannibal with his best troops, and fell furiously on the Romans, who did not see them till they felt their shock. A rain of spears and darts whistled through the mist, and plunged into the Roman ranks—the spearmen remaining invisible. And so it



LAKE THRASYMENE.

was, the Romans being taken unawares, and blinded by the fog, that the Carthaginians routed them utterly. Cruel Hannibal—his vow always uppermost in his mind—had given orders not to spare a single Roman. Most savage was the order; and savagely was it obeyed. Of all that Roman army which marched that morning by the side of peaceful Lake Thrasymene, only six thousand wounded men escaped to tell the tale. Flaminius himself was butchered at the head of his troops.

There was a strange stillness at Rome a day or two after the battle. News had come from the army. Men gathered in the Forum and the streets, talking

together in whispers. Women, with babies in their arms, stood at their doors, pale and trembling. The Senators walked to the Senate-house with downcast eyes and dark faces. At last, the suspense of the people could no longer be borne. A frantic cry burst forth from the crowd, and men, women, and children rushed to the Senate and shouted that they wanted to know the whole truth.

POMPONIUS MATHO rose, and said, in a grave voice,

“We have been beaten in a great battle; the army is destroyed, and the Consul is killed.”

If Hannibal had heard the groans and the shrieks of agony which rose from that crowd of bereaved parents, and widows, and orphans, I think he might have forgotten his oath for a short while.

But the Romans soon got over their grief. From sunrise to sunset the Senate sat, taking counsel on the desperate state of affairs; and at last, no man even breathing the idea of peace, a new army was raised, and all made ready for another fight. When the question arose, Who was to command, now that Flaminius was dead? every one said that wise FABIVS THE GREAT was the best man. So they made him Dictator; and as he was a noble, they gave him for Master of the Horse MINUCIVS RUFVS, a man of the people.

Hannibal had marched down through Umbria into the rich country to the southeast of Rome. Thither Fabius followed him; but, greatly to the disgust of Hannibal, he would not fight a battle. His tents were pitched in the mountains and highlands, where

the swift African horsemen could not get at them ; and all the wiles and taunts of the Carthaginians could not tempt him down into the plain. Hannibal sent his Africans out to scour the country far and wide, and the Romans from their highland fastnesses could see the smoke rising from the burning villages of their friends and their own homes. But still, rage as they did at the sight, Fabius would not suffer them to stir.

He was biding his time. When Hannibal moved, Fabius moved after him, creeping along the tops of the mountain ridges, and watching for a chance to cut him off from his supplies, or to lock him up in some such defile as the Caudine Forks.

Once Fabius nearly succeeded in entrapping him between the mountains and the River Volturnus. Every mountain pass was guarded, and it seemed impossible for the Carthaginians to escape. But Hannibal was too deep for the Romans. Tying a bundle of dry twigs and chips to the horns of each of two thousand oxen he had, he lit the twigs at midnight, and drove the oxen up the mountain side. They, bellowing from the pain, and tossing their blazing heads, rushed wildly up the heights ; and the Romans, not knowing what was the meaning of this vast multitude of fires flashing through the midnight darkness, set up a cry, " Hannibal is upon us ! " and ran to the hills. Then the Carthaginians quickly marched out of the trap by the pass which was left unguarded.

Thus all the fruits of Fabius's patience and watching were lost. But he was not discouraged. He

began again, as before, to hang on the skirts and wings of Hannibal's army; and not all the grumbling or all the prayers of his restless soldiers could induce him to let them try a battle.

All this while the people of Rome were waiting anxiously to hear how it fared with the army. At first they were well pleased with the coolness and skill of Fabius; but after a time, the noisiest among them began to say to each other: Why does he not fight a battle? Is he afraid of Hannibal? And the Master of the Horse, Minucius, sending word to Rome that he too thought Fabius was over-cautious, and hinting pretty plainly that if he had the command things would be managed very differently, the people burst into open uproar. To satisfy them, the Senate, itself nothing loth, ordered that Minucius should have equal power with the Dictator. He and Fabius thereupon divided the army between them.

Minucius had soon quite enough of this plan. For, as he was far less cautious than Fabius, Hannibal easily entrapped him into a fight, and would have cut off his half of the army to a man, but for the other half, which came under the Dictator to his help and rescued him. Like an honest man, as he was, Minucius went straight to Fabius after this, and, of his own accord, gave up the sole command to him.

But at Rome the wisdom of Fabius was not understood. Many noisy persons said he was evidently afraid of Hannibal. They sneered at him, and called him the Delayer. So when his six months were over, no man asked him to stay where he was, but

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the people chose as their Consuls **TERENTIUS VARRO** and **ÆMILIUS PAULUS**.

Æmilius was a noble, and a friend of **Fabius**, but **Varro** was the son of a butcher. A man of great power and nerve, strong of heart, and eloquent of speech, but daring and headstrong, like **Flaminius**. **Æmilius** was for following the plan of **Fabius**, and lurking in the mountains; but the people at Rome and **Varro** were all for fighting.

So—the two armies lying opposite each other near the strong fort of **Cannæ**, and by the little River **Anfidus**—when it was **Varro's** turn to command, he hoisted the red flag over his tent. This was the signal for battle. The Romans had the most men, but the Carthaginian horse were far fleetier and better drilled than the Roman, and **Varro** was a mere schoolboy beside so great a soldier as **Hannibal**.



CANNÆ

A southern gale was blowing at the time, and Hannibal made it help him by placing his men with their faces to the north, so that the dust, which it blew before it in clouds, was whirled into the eyes of the Romans. Varro helped him too, in his way; for he formed his men into such dense masses that more than half of them were of no use, and they were all so huddled together that they could hardly use their swords. What with these helps, and the flashing valor of his African horsemen, Hannibal won the day. The Romans, packed together like sheep in a flock, were hewed down by the Carthaginians on all sides at once. Round and round the dense mass rode Hannibal and his brother MAGO, bidding the victors spare none, but kill, kill, kill!

And kill they did, from morn till sundown, as long as their hands could hold sword or spear. So many brave Romans fell in that day's fight that history hardly tells of any such slaughter at any battle before or since; and when the conquerors the next morning stripped the corpses of their clothes and ornaments, they counted the rings alone by the bushel.

They say that a Tribune of the soldiers galloping away from the field when he saw the day was lost, came upon the Consul Æmilius, who was badly wounded, and offered him his horse, saying, "Thou, at least, Æmilius, art innocent of this day's disaster." But the brave Roman refused. "Waste no time on me," he cried, "but hie to Rome with all speed, and bid them fortify the city against Hannibal's coming. And say to Fabius that, living or

dying, Æmilius thought his counsels were the best." The Africans were close upon them, and the Tribune had only time to gallop off. As he went, he turned back to look, and saw the wounded Consul fighting feebly in a crowd of enemies.

The dreadful news fell upon the city like a thunder-clap. But it was no time for weeping. For Rome, it was now a question of life or death; and the Roman spirit was equal to the crisis.

Every man was armed: from out the prisons the thieves were taken and offered pardon if they would fight the enemy. The gates were shut, and a strong guard set to watch that no man left the city. When Hannibal sent to say he had so many prisoners, and would Rome ransom them? the answer was: No, Rome wanted all her money for her own defense. And when Varro, broken down by the weight of his misfortune, retreated to Rome with the small handful of men that remained to him, the whole Senate, hate him though the nobles did, marched out to meet him, and, instead of reproaching him for his rashness, thanked him for that he had not despaired of the republic.

Such manliness you will seldom find in any other people.

All over Italy the old allies and friends of the Romans now began to rebel against them. Most of the Samnites and their neighbors joined Hannibal; and Capua, the greatest city in Italy next to Rome, opened its gates and received his soldiers as friends. It seemed as though Rome could not possibly escape.

But the spirit of the Roman people was so great that they did not for one moment lose hope. Army after army they sent forth to watch Hannibal and his new allies: round him on every side, before him, behind him, wherever he was, he always found new Romans. Never a battle would they fight with him—they knew him and his terrible African cavalry too well for that; but white-haired old Fabius the Great guiding all by his wise counsels, they hung round him and cut off his supplies, and destroyed the crops of his allies, and when he attacked them, fell back to some walled city, from which they beat him off. Year after year this sort of work lasted, till Hannibal began to grow very tired of the war, and to wish for some safe sea-port from which, in case of trouble, he could escape to Africa.

The best place for him was Tarentum, which the Romans held. Now in Tarentum there were two parties, one in favor of the Romans, the other hating them. The latter began to plot to bring the people round to the side of Hannibal. The Romans heard of it; and straightway, as the custom of that cruel age was, they put to death some noble Tarentines who were at Rome.

When the news of this bloody deed reached Tarentum it made Rome's friends colder, and her enemies stronger and more resolved. The latter sent word to Hannibal that if he would march down to the city they would give it up to him.

He was only too glad, and marched away directly. Tarentum was a walled city, and Roman soldiers guarded the walls and the gates. Hannibal's

friends were obliged to resort to a trick to get his soldiers in. One of them, who was a great hunter, was in the habit of returning to the city with his game late at night; and as he always, when the soldiers opened the gate to let him in, made them some present or other, he was a favorite of theirs.

One night this Tarentine rapped loudly at the gate, and called to the sentinel to let him in, "for," said he, "I have a boar here I have killed; and it is so heavy that I can carry it no longer." The soldier made haste to open the gate. The hunter, with a couple of disguised Africans, entered, carrying a boar; and while the sentinel was looking at the beast, the Tarentine killed him with a blow. Then the gates were opened, and Hannibal and his men rushed in.

The Roman Governor, who had fallen into the habits of the people, had spent the day in feasting and drinking: he had only time to throw himself, drunk as he was, into a boat and row to the citadel. There he shut himself up, while Hannibal took possession of the city, and plundered the houses of the Romans.

Still the people at Rome were unshaken. Awful distress prevailed in the city, so many men being taken from their work to fight, so many being killed. But the chief men never swerved for a second from their purpose of driving out the invader, and saving Rome. While Hannibal was away south, a Roman army laid siege to Capua.

The Capuans sent in all haste to Hannibal for help. Up he came, but so skillful were the Roman

leaders, and so strong were their forts, that he could not force them to raise the siege. Then said Hannibal to his men, "Let us go and lay siege to Rome. When the Romans find us there, they will very quickly abandon the siege of Capua to protect their own city."

And all the Africans, with their horse and their elephants, marched off to Rome. When the Romans heard of their coming they shut their gates, and made ready for the worst. Noble matrons and beautiful young girls flocked to the temples of the gods, with flowing hair and swollen eyes, and prayed for help. Young men girt their garments tightly about their waist, and with clenched teeth stood upon the battlements gazing for the Carthaginian army. In the Forum sat the white-haired Senators, each in his chair, calm and grave of face as in the olden time when the Gauls massacred their forefathers, and never thinking for one single instant of giving up to Hannibal, come what might.

At last, in a mighty cloud of dust, the terrible African came with his horsemen, and his foot-soldiers, and his elephants, and halted over against the walls of Rome. In his mind, you may be sure, his ancient vow was uppermost as he smiled grimly, and spurred his horse straight up to the wall, and with all his might flung a javelin into the city. Often must he have thought of his father, and of his deadly hate of Rome, as his fierce Africans rode north and south, and east and west, through the Roman country, and burned, and pillaged, and laid waste those beautiful fields and happy homes.

But the Romans did not stir. Neither within the walls nor without, before Capua, did the soldiers move. Brave old Fabius was at Capua. He saw very plainly what Hannibal wanted, and instead of falling into the trap, he pushed on the siege with fresh vigor. At Rome, whenever the Africans drew near the walls, they were saluted with such a shower of javelins that they very quickly drew back. While he lay before the city, the Senate sent orders for one of their best generals to go to Spain; and the ground on which Hannibal's tent was pitched was sold by auction for a larger price than it was ever worth before. So, at last, with a heavy heart Hannibal gave the word to retreat.

This was the turning point in his fortunes. Up to this moment all had gone well with him and his country. The hour of misfortune was now come. "I see," said the great man to his officers, "that the gods are wearying of granting me their favors." The truth was, the Romans could not be conquered.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ARCHIMEDES.

ALL this time the war was going on in Spain, Sardinia, and Sicily, as well as Italy.

In Spain, at first the Romans had the advantage. Their troops were led by two brave brothers named **SCIPIO**, who won several victories, and regained much of the territory which **Hannibal** had wrested from Rome. But at last, in an evil day, one of them was killed; and a few weeks after, his brother was cut down in battle likewise. This for a time checked the Roman progress in Spain.

In Sicily, the Romans had a stanch friend in King **HIERO** of Syracuse. He was a brave and wise king, who, to the last day of his life, stood by the Romans in their wars, and sent them corn and food for their troops when they were hard pressed. When he died at the ripe old age of ninety, he was succeeded by his grandson, a weak, vicious boy of fifteen. It was a bad business for the rich city of Syracuse.

The boy-king—whose name was **HIERONYMUS**—no sooner found himself on the throne than he broke faith with the Romans, and said he would take the side of Carthage in the war. Some of his people were glad of the change, but others were enraged at it; and all hating him on account of his vices, a

party of them fell on him one day and murdered him.

The murderers ran into the city with the clothes of the poor boy-king all stained with his blood, and the crown they had torn from his dying head. Showing these to the people, they boasted of the cruel deed, and cried noisily, "Liberty! liberty!" until most of the townsfolk joined them, more to see what would come of it than from any other reason.

They soon saw enough. A new government was formed: the uncle and the brother-in-law of the murdered king were members of it; but their colleagues suspected them, and one day, as they entered the council-chamber, they were murdered by the guards. Then the murderers, made more ravenous for blood by the memory of these crimes, declared that not one of King Hiero's family must live. His three daughters were butchered. One of them had two children, fair young girls, who were surely harmless. But the men of Syracuse had no heart; they hunted them down in the streets of the city, and slaughtered the poor creatures like wild beasts, with blows of spear and sword and pike. A terrible time this!

The Roman general in Sicily was the Consul MARCELLUS—a man of tremendous vigor and relentless cruelty. He made terms with the butchers of Syracuse, who said they were all for the Romans; then marched against the town of Leontini, which had risen against the Romans, and taken the side of Carthage. He very quickly stormed it, and

let loose upon it the whole of his soldiery, bidding them take and destroy what they pleased. Two thousand deserters from the Roman army, whom he found there, he put to death in cold blood.

When the news of this fearful massacre reached Syracuse, it threw the whole city into an uproar. From end to end the cry was for war with Rome. It was hard work for Rome's friends to make their escape, so frantic was the rage of the people at the slaughter of their allies at Leontini.

Marcellus, when he was told of the riot and tumult at Syracuse, marched thither directly. The gates were shut against him. Then he collected a strong army and a large fleet, and laid siege to the place. So vigorously did he attack it by land and by sea, that he would have taken it but for the skill and science of a wonderful man named ARCHIMEDES.

Archimedes was a philosopher; that is to say, he spent all his time in thinking and working out problems in science. He had been a close friend of good King Hiero. On one occasion the King ordered a crown to be made by a goldsmith of Syracuse, and gave the man the gold of which it was to be made. When the crown was finished, and the goldsmith delivered it to the King, he weighed it and found that it weighed exactly as much as the gold he had furnished. Still he suspected that the goldsmith had cheated him by using silver in the inside of the gold, and gave the crown to Archimedes to try if he could find out if it was so.

It would not take one of our men of science long to test such a point as this; but in the days of Ar-

Archimedes' science was not far advanced, and neither he nor any one else knew how to ascertain whether or no there was silver in the inside. While he was thinking over the matter, and trying all sorts of ways to solve the problem, he stepped into a very full bath. The water of the bath immediately began to flow over the side.

The thought at once flashed upon the mind of Archimedes that he could find out what he wanted to know by the help of water. They say that he was so excited by the discovery that he ran home, naked as he was, shouting, "Eureka!" I have found it!

He took a lump of pure gold equal in weight to the crown, dipped it in a vessel full to the brim, and measured exactly the quantity of water that flowed over. Then he filled the vessel, and dipped the crown itself, and measured the water it displaced. It was much more than the lump had caused to overflow. Then Archimedes knew that some other metal lighter than gold had been mixed with the gold in the crown.

When Hiero died, Archimedes took no part in the quarrels or the butcheries I have related, but remained in his own house, like a great, wise man, wrapped in study. When the Romans laid siege to the city, the government called upon Archimedes to help them, and he set his whole soul to work to invent machines to annoy and repel the invader.

He built immense slings capable of hurling huge stones to a great distance, and with these he pelted the Roman ships till they were glad to sheer off out

of reach. He also contrived a sort of crane which stood on the walls of the city by the water side. This crane must have been something like the old-fashioned pumps you see in some parts of the country—a long straight spar balanced on the top of a post with the bucket and chain at one end and a heavy weight at the other. Instead of a bucket, Archimedes fastened a strong iron hook to the end of his chain, and to the other end of the spar he hung heavy weights which could be slipped off in a moment. When the Roman ships sailed up to the attack close under the walls, this great machine was set to work, and the hook lowered till it caught the rigging or spars of the ship. Then play was given to the weights, which were so immense that they lifted the ship partly out of water. Then, at a sudden signal, the weights were slipped off, and the ship fell with such a shock that she often foundered.

Another great machine which Archimedes is said to have invented was a series of burning-glasses, so powerful that he could with them set fire to a ship at a hundred and fifty yards distance. Some people think the story of these burning-glasses is a fable; but there is nothing impossible in it.

At all events, with or without burning-glasses, Archimedes contrived to invent so many and so terrible engines of war that for three years the Romans lay before Syracuse without being able to take it.

At last, a Syracusan traitor, named Sosis—one of the murderers of Hieronymus—showed them a secret path to one of the great towers which guarded the wall. They chose a dark night for the attack,

and a time when the Syracusans were celebrating a religious feast, as their custom was, with deep draughts of wine. Thanks to this, and to their guide the traitor Sosis, the Romans scaled the wall before the Syracusans were aroused, and when morning dawned half the city was in their power.

The other half still held out. The people of Carthage made great efforts to save it; they sent more men, with a strong fleet and good leaders, to attack the Romans. But the hot months found the Carthaginians encamped in low ground, and disease broke out among them and almost destroyed their army.

What the character of the Syracusans was you know from the horrible butchering and rioting that took place when the boy-king was murdered. The same shocking scenes were now repeated. All was uproar and disorder. New leaders were set up one day and stabbed the next. No man knew what to do, how to defend himself, or whom to obey.

It was easy work for Marcellus to find more traitors like Sosis, who agreed for a bribe to let him into the remaining half of the city. A Spaniard did the deed; and again, as before, the sun rose on the horror-struck people of Syracuse, and showed them all their strong-holds in the hands of the Romans. Small chance had they of pity who fell into the iron grasp of Marcellus.

As at Leontini, he bade his soldiers plunder their fill. None knew better how to do it than his Romans. They stripped every house in the place. Money, jewels, works of art, clothing, arms, and even

food they wrested from the wretched people, slaughtering without mercy all who ventured to oppose them. Marcellus himself seized every thing that was in the temples ; and so utterly destitute did his soldiers leave the poor Syracusans that, to save themselves from starving, they were obliged to sell themselves as slaves.

In the midst of the wreck and clamor of the sack, an old man sat on the ground in his garden, drawing problems on the sand. It was Archimedes. So lost to every thing around him, in his deep study, that perhaps he did not know the city was taken ; and when a brutal soldier spoke to him, he did not hear or answer him. The soldier raised his sword, and struck the white hairs of the aged philosopher to the earth.

So he died—one of the greatest thinkers of ancient times. A small matter to the world the sack of that city, great and rich as it was, in comparison with the death of that wise and good man. Even Marcellus was so ashamed of his murder that he gave out that he had tried to prevent it, and restored to his relations all the property they had lost. But people did not wholly believe him ; and though he was a great soldier and saved Sicily to Rome, in after times he was chiefly remembered as the man whose army had butchered in cold blood the great philosopher of Syracuse.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

SCIPIO THE AFRICAN.

THE Romans lay before Capua, blocking up every road that led to the country, and suffering no man to go out or go in. Day after day, and week after week, and month after month, the Capuans bore the misery of the siege, hoping that Hannibal would come to their aid; but no Hannibal came. Then they saw they must yield. All the chief men met together at the house of one of them, and ate and drank in company: when the merry feast was over, each took poison and died.

The next day the city surrendered. The Roman general, FULVIUS, entered with a grand concourse of soldiers; the few great men who survived he seized and sent to Rome to be starved to death. Thence to other small places in the neighborhood, which had likewise revolted against Rome; their chief men he scourged and beheaded. So swiftly did he do his cruel work, that in a few days Capua and all the country round about were Roman once more, and every city and town was in mourning for the loss of its chief citizens. Cruel as Hannibal was, the people of Italy began to think his enmity was not worse after all than the wrath of bloody Rome.

There was very little to choose between them. It was a dreadful time for the poor farmers, and vine-

growers, and herdsmen of the country; whichever side they took, they were sure to be pillaged, and to see their farms laid waste and their houses spoiled. All the beautiful Roman country lay bare as a wilderness.

Hannibal had sent to Carthage for more men, and his brother HASDRUBAL came marching over the mountains from Spain to join him with a fresh army. When he arrived in Italy he sent off swift messengers on horseback to tell Hannibal that he would be with him on such a day.

The horsemen rode and rode on their swift African horses, but they never came up with Hannibal. For the Romans catching them, they were kept prisoners; and the Roman Consul, NERO, got Hasdrubal's letter.

He said never a word. But that night he chose seven thousand of his best men, and bade them march to the north for their lives. They, guessing what he meant, marched as soldiers perhaps never marched before. Not till they were ready to drop from fatigue did they halt to rest; and as for eating, a handful of corn, swallowed as they marched, was all they wanted. So they came up with Hasdrubal long before he expected them; and driving him backward till the mountain torrent Metaurus blocked the way, attacked and defeated him. Hasdrubal himself and most of his men were killed.

Then the seven thousand marched back again to where Hannibal was. They say that when they drew near his camp some of them tossed over to his sentinels a dead man's head. A sentinel picked it

up and bore it to Hannibal. He looked at it for a moment and saw that it was his brother's!

Not thus had Hannibal dealt with the Roman leaders who had fallen in battle. Perhaps these cruel soldiers of Nero had forgotten how Hannibal had reverently buried the dead body of the Consul Flaminius who fell on the bloody day of Thrasy-mene. And how, when Metellus was killed in a skirmish, Hannibal had had his body burned, as the custom of those days was, and sent the ashes in an urn to his son. But it mattered little.

Blows began to fall thick and heavy on Carthage. A young Roman noble named SCIPIO was chosen to lead the Roman army in Spain. He was very young, but a brave soldier, and so great a favorite with the people that a short while before they had chosen him to be Ædile. The Tribunes looked at the law, and said he could not serve, as he was too young; but Scipio replied—like JOHN RANDOLPH in the like case—that if the people chose to elect him, that made him old enough.

One great cause of his popularity was the idea the people had that, like the old King Numa, he had private meetings with the gods. There is no doubt but Scipio himself believed to some extent that he was inspired. Many great men have believed something of the same kind, and have fancied they were sent to do God's work. So young Scipio, when he withdrew from the company of other men, and shut himself up alone with his thoughts in the grand old temples of Rome, came to fancy that it was the gods who kindled the fire he felt in his

heart, and the gods who shaped the mighty schemes that seethed in his brain. It was a mistake, as you know; but I am sure it made Scipio a bolder and a more successful man.

Off he went now to Spain, where, as you remember, his father and his uncle had been killed, and the Roman power was at a very low ebb. Scipio soon changed the appearance of affairs. He burst like a whirlwind on the great city of new Carthage, and took it. Then he fought the Carthaginian leaders and beat them. What native tribes took their part he scattered.

After every victory he tried what he could do to win the love of the conquered. Instead of putting the chief men to death, as so many Roman generals had done, he let them go free, and some he loaded with presents. In this way the people of Spain began to like him far better than the Carthaginian leaders, and to flock to his side.

One story is told of his humanity which appeared more wonderful in ancient times than it would to-day. At the capture of a town in Spain, a young girl of surpassing beauty was taken and brought to Scipio, as his prize. No one, at that day, would have thought it wrong in him to have made her his slave. But hearing that she was betrothed to a young Spaniard who was among the prisoners, he bade the man be sought out, and brought before him. Then, while the Spaniard stood with downcast eyes before the victorious general, and expected at the very least to be sold as a slave or perhaps beheaded, Scipio led his betrothed forward, and joined their hands.

“Go,” said he, “I set you both free; be happy, and, if you can, be the friends of Rome.”

You can easily fancy how acts like this won the hearts of the Spaniards. In a very short time they all took his side, drove the Carthaginians out of Spain, and even wanted to make Scipio their king. But to this he would not listen for a moment. His business was with Carthage.

So when Spain was subdued, without wasting a moment Scipio left his army, took ship, and crossed over to Africa. On the coast to the west of Carthage there lived a powerful nation called Numidians. To their king—SYPHAX—went Scipio, to try to persuade him to take the part of Rome in the war.

Syphax received him well; but he also received at the same time a Carthaginian noble named HASDRUBAL, who had come to persuade him to take the part of Carthage. The two strangers argued against each other, each striving to make a better impression on King Syphax than his rival. Scipio, they say, was a man of winning manners and great eloquence; he could talk far better than Hasdrubal. But Hasdrubal had a daughter of great beauty named SOPHONISBA. The moment Syphax saw her, he fell in love with her; and when Hasdrubal said that if he would take the side of Carthage he might have his daughter to wife, the lovely Sophonisba smiling sweetly the while, all Scipio's eloquence seemed the merest nonsense to the love-struck king. He gave his hand to Hasdrubal, and married Sophonisba, after which Scipio made his way home as fast as he could.

Trouble was in store for him. His soldiers mutinied; the Senators were jealous of him. But he had too much faith in his divine mission to be affected by these mishaps. His turbulent soldiers he quickly subdued; then going to Rome, he rode rough-shod over his enemies among the nobles, and got himself chosen Consul without any difficulty. There was no man like him in Rome for self-reliance or energy.

Gathering in all haste an army, in spite of the jealous Senate, he crossed boldly over to Africa. The Carthaginians were ready to meet him. They had a strong army, and their new friend Syphax had joined them with another, in payment of his lovely young wife.

It so happened, however, that this lovely young lady had, in times gone by, been promised in marriage to a young Numidian prince named MASINISSA. When the Carthaginians wanted to win over Syphax, Masinissa was roughly set aside, and the fair Sophonisba given to his rival. With rage in his heart, Masinissa swore to be revenged on Hasdrubal and Carthage; and now, when Scipio landed, he hastened to join him with all the troops he could raise.

The two armies lay over against each other; the Carthaginians far the most numerous. But the Carthaginian tents were made of reeds, thatch, and dried leaves placed on hurdles of dry branches. To these Scipio set fire at night, and when the Carthaginians and their allies ran out of their tents, struck with fear at the tremendous fires by which

they were surrounded, he fell upon them and routed them easily. It was just such an affair as the attack of the Pequod forts, at the mouth of the Thames in Connecticut, by old John Mason, more than a couple of hundred years ago, but on a far grander scale.

King Syphax lost nearly the whole of his army, and fled in all haste. He was for leaving the Carthaginians to fight their own battles; but his beautiful wife was true to her country, and persuaded him to raise another army. Masinissa, raging like a lion on his track, fell upon him and defeated him again. Again did Sophonisba prevail upon him to gather his remaining men together to help Carthage. But for the third time that terrible Masinissa, thinking of nothing but her he had loved so dearly, attacked him and defeated him.

This time he won the prize he wanted. Sophonisba fell into his hands. He had sworn vengeance against her, and fancied he hated her with a deadly hate; but the moment he saw her, so resistless was her loveliness, that he forgot all about his oaths, and only remembered his love. In the midst of smoking ruins, with the dead and the dying around him, he married her, and promised himself at last a full enjoyment of the happiness he had so long sought.

But Scipio, when he heard of the marriage, said that no such thing could be. He was afraid, no doubt, that with such a lovely wife Masinissa would care less for war; and he sent word to him that he must give up Sophonisba to be sold with the rest of

the prisoners. The African dared not refuse; but neither could he bear the thought that his beautiful young wife should be sold with the rest of the booty, and exposed to hardship and insult. So he made answer that Scipio should be obeyed; but at the same time sent poison to Sophonisba. She, understanding well what he meant, drank the poison forthwith and died.

There was no resisting Scipio. Town after town fell into his hands; and the Carthaginians, trembling as they had done in the time of Regulus, sent hastily for Hannibal, who was still in Italy. They say that Hannibal was very loth to return to Africa. He had spent fifteen years in Italy, and overrun it from end to end. He had never lost a battle, and the Romans so feared him that they dared not meet him in the field. Long as he had waited, his patience was not worn out; he still hoped to see the sack of Rome, and the thorough fulfillment of his vow.

But he obeyed his country, and returned with all his men.

They say that he sent spies to examine the camp of Scipio; and that the latter, detecting them, led them through the camp, showed them every thing, then sent them back safe. They say also that Hannibal, struck by this act, begged Scipio to meet him; that they met, made fine speeches to each other, and parted greatly impressed with mutual admiration.

However this be, it did not hinder the battle. It was fought near a town called Zama, five days' journey from Carthage; and, for the first time in his life,

Hannibal was beaten. He had none of his swift African horsemen left; his elephants were useless; and, after a bloody fight, the Romans won the day.

This defeat killed Carthage. Its strength was gone. When some in the Senate talked of resisting still, Hannibal sternly bade them be silent. They must have peace, he said, on any terms, for they could fight no longer.

And peace was made accordingly, on terms so grievous to Carthage that her freedom was only a shadow. Yet a little while, and even that shadow will not be left her.

As for Scipio, the Romans were so grateful to him that they gave him the surname of THE AFRICAN.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

CATO THE CENSOR.

IN the same year that Scipio the African was born, there was born a son to an old soldier of Tusculum, whose name was PORCIUS, or THE SWINE-HERD. The boy, in early youth, showed so much sense that the people gave him the name of CATO, or THE SHREWD. His father bred him to work on his farm; teaching him to live with rustics, to toil as hard as any of his slaves, and when the day's work was done, feeding his young mind with stirring tales of the sturdy Romans of the olden time.

Like all young Romans, Cato became a soldier. He fought bravely at Capua, in Spain, and under Scipio in Africa. But he was chiefly noted, while quite a young man, for his rigid plainness of living



COUNTRYMEN EATING IN A TAVERN.

and his strict honesty. When at home, he ate and lived with his farm servants, and as they did. When he was a general in Spain, he often cooked his own food; and when the war was over, he sold his only horse, so that the state should not be at the expense of carrying him home.

After his return from Africa he was made *Ædile*, and then *Consul*. He was such an enemy to show, that, even when he was *Consul*, no man in Rome lived more plainly than he; and many were the fights between him and the fine ladies of Rome about dresses, and liveries, and jewels, and such matters. Bold and dashing as Scipio was, it was very clear that he would find a troublesome rival in Cato.

There was no peace yet, and Hannibal's spirit was not quenched. After the peace with Carthage, Rome sent a few of her troops over to Greece to settle with PHILIP, King of Macedon. Philip had been a friend of Hannibal's, and would have helped him in the war if it had lasted; not that he cared much for Carthage or Rome either, but he wanted to make himself king of all Greece, and foolishly thought that Hannibal would put him in the way of doing so.

Now this wily King was caught in his own trap. Hannibal could not help him; and the Romans sent their general FLAMININUS into Greece just to give the men of Macedon a lesson. It was easy enough. The smaller states of Greece were glad to see Philip humbled; they did all they could for the Romans, and Flamininus drove Philip into the country of the people called the Dog-heads. There a great battle

was fought. Philip had his phalanx, according to the custom of his country, and the Dog-heads fought in the front of his army ; but the Roman legions broke down Dog-heads and phalanx, and won the day.

Then Flaminius went to Corinth, and told the Greeks, with a great flourish, that he had come to restore their liberty ; and they, poor simple people, were so delighted at the news, that they almost crushed him to death in their attempts to embrace him.

Hannibal, you may be sure, watched the war with Philip with eager eyes. When he saw that there was no prospect of the Romans being beaten, he sent word to the King of Syria—ANTIOCHUS THE GREAT—that there was a fine chance for him to conquer Rome if he chose. Antiochus had been thinking of that very thing, and had come to the same conclusion. So he began to make ready for war.

The Romans hearing of it, sent over to Carthage to make sure of Hannibal ; but he got wind of their design, and fled to Antiochus. The King of Syria was ready for war by this time. Hannibal wanted him to sail straight to Italy ; but Antiochus, who was a weak, shallow man, thought it better to conquer Greece first.

You can easily fancy how Hannibal must have raged and chafed when this foolish king, having crossed over to Greece, found nothing better to do for the first six months than to get married, and feast and enjoy himself. Little he knew of the men he had dared to provoke. When his feasting and love-making were over, he tried a battle with the

Romans, near the famous pass of Thermopylæ, in Greece, and was beaten to his heart's content— young Porcius Cato chiefest among the Roman victors that day.

Away he went home after this; and I dare say Hannibal was sick of him by this time, for he managed the war so badly that the two Scipios—the African and his brother LUCIUS—quickly overcame him, and stripped him of most of his power and territory. Then said they to Antiochus, “We must have Hannibal!”

It was not very magnanimous for a great state like Rome to hunt down this broken old man so pitilessly; but even in his poverty and helplessness he seemed so terrible, that the Scipios, at the very first word of peace, said—“We must have Hannibal!”

And they would have had him, no doubt, but that some one gave him a hint of what was plotting against him; and Antiochus, to his honor, being willing that he should escape, he fled. For years he wandered through the world, in sorrow, poverty, and old age; thinking sadly no doubt, in these his days of misfortune, of that terrible vow which had been his ruin.

At last, he found a home at the court of King PRUSIAS of Bithynia. He was sixty at the time; but so hale a man that he served Prusias in his wars, and did so much for the petty monarch that he began to fancy himself quite an important sovereign. At last, these pitiless Romans coming to hear of Hannibal's last home, they sent to Prusias,

and in the old words said—"We must have Hannibal!"

There was no manliness in the Bithynian king. He answered: "Oh, certainly; he is at such a place. I will send a file of soldiers for him. Any thing to please my lords the Romans."

I dare say Flamininus, who was the Roman messenger on this occasion, and a man of fine manly heart, let Prusias see how he despised him for his baseness; but he said nothing. One of the courtiers, however, took horse at once, and riding hard, came up with Hannibal before the soldiers, and told him what was in store.

Then the great African saw that his game of life was played out. He had long foreseen this end of his troubles; and to avoid being taken, had had seven doors made to his house to insure his escape. But when he looked out now, he saw all seven guarded by the soldiers. As the custom of the ancient heroes was, he called for poison, and drank it. "The Romans," said he, bitterly, "must be very anxious, methinks, to see the death of an old man, that they tempt Prusias to murder his guest." And so he died.

In the same year died Scipio the African. In his old age he had lived as men of his stamp mostly do. He thought himself almost equal to the gods; and was so haughty and proud, that he was named the Prince of the Senate. When he was young and successful, and when Rome was hard pressed, his proud temper and lawless acts had been forgiven. But when the danger passed away, the Romans were

less content to be trampled: stern, rugged Cato, for one, declared he would never let Scipio raise himself above the law.

After the peace with Antiochus, Cato called for the accounts of the two brothers Scipio, to show that they had not received bribes from the Syrian king. Lucius accordingly produced the accounts, and was going to read them to the Senate, when his brother snatched them out of his hands and tore them in pieces. He did this, he said, because the honor of a Scipio was above suspicion; but I am afraid that this was only a grand flourish, and that the accounts would have proved the Scipios to have acted dishonestly.

At all events, afterward, inquiry was set on foot, and enough proof was found to convict Lucius Scipio of corruption. He was fined accordingly.

Then the Tribunes accused his brother the African, stern Cato saying that he ought to be tried. But when his turn came to speak in his defense, he cried, "Romans, this day seventeen years ago we won the battle of Zama, and overcame Carthage. Let us go to the Capitol and render thanks to the gods!"

And the people, fired by the idea, followed him to the Capitol, and forgot all about his trial for the moment. Scipio knew well, however, that Cato would not forget. While the stir still lasted in the city, he withdrew quietly to a country place called Liternum, where he died. Before his death, he ordered these words to be inscribed on his tomb: "Ungrateful country, thou shalt not have my bones!"

The story of Scipio is a pleasant one, and teaches

a useful lesson. He was, as you have learned, a brilliant, dashing soldier ; full of fire, and spirit, and talent ; loved his country, and served her at the risk of his life. A man chiefly remarkable, though, for his tremendous energy and self-will. He could submit to no restraint, however proper or just. He trampled the laws of his country just as quickly as the armies of her foes ; paid no more respect to the government of Rome than to the generals of Carthage.

There are passages in his life which may remind you of a famous American hero—ANDREW JACKSON. But there is this difference between the two. When Andrew Jackson broke the laws of his country by imprisoning Judge Hall at New Orleans and setting at naught the authority of the courts, he acted as Scipio might have done under the pressure of very trying circumstances, and for the probable good of his country. But when Andrew Jackson, after the danger was past, went of his own accord and stood his trial for having broken the law, and paid the fine imposed by the court, he acted as Scipio would not have done. If he had chosen to say to the people in the court-house, "Americans, so many days ago we won the battle of New Orleans, let us go and offer up thanks," I dare say they would have been just as much excited as the Romans in the like case, and would have carried the General off in triumph. He said nothing of the kind, but set the example of submission to the law. If Scipio had done the same, he would have been the greatest man in Roman story. As it was, I

make no doubt he was the first of the murderers of the republic.

After his exile, Cato became the chief person at Rome. He was made Censor, and never had Rome so strict and rigid an officer. Small chance had bad men or rich profligates of escaping punishment when it was his business to keep watch over the morals of the State. Little hope had they of bending him one hair's-breadth from the straight line of Roman virtue.

While he was fighting day and night against the wasteful and luxurious habits that the Romans were learning from their neighbors the Greeks, the war with Macedon broke out afresh. Old King Philip had the treaty of peace with Rome read to him twice a day till he died. He knew what was coming. His son PERSEUS was king when the war broke out. He collected his men, and feeling that it was a struggle for life and death, fought with such valor that the first Roman armies that were sent over to Greece were beaten.

Then the Romans raised a great army, and gave the command of it to old ÆMILIANUS PAULUS, son of the Consul who was killed at Cannæ. He met Perseus at a place called Pydna. The augurs, as absurd as usual, were for putting off the fight, as there was an eclipse of the sun at the time. But Æmilianus cared very little for their croaking; the battle was fought, and Perseus was beaten.

This was the end of Macedon. Perseus fled for refuge to a temple. As the Romans dared not drag him from thence, he was safe for some time; but

the cruel Romans seized his little children, and the poor father fearing for them, gave himself up, and threw himself at the knees of Æmilianus, begging that he might be spared the shame of walking in the conqueror's triumph.

"That is in thy power," answered the hard-hearted Roman, meaning that he might kill himself if he chose.

He did not. Taken to Rome, he was led in triumph in chains. Behind him walked his three little children, who stretched their little hands to the rude Roman people as they passed, and begged their father's life. You know how the Romans usually dealt with captive kings—that dreadful underground prison—the bloody jailers with their torches—the stifled groans—you remember all this. Perseus was thrust into that horrible place. But it pleased God, three days before the triumph, to take away the life of one of the sons of the conqueror Æmilianus, and, five days afterward, of another. These misfortunes, I am sure, softened the Roman's heart: he interceded for Perseus, and he was not murdered.

These were proud times for Rome. Great Greece, with all her treasures, and all her learning, and all her great men—they were not many though, now—was overrun. Her splendid cities were ravaged by the Romans, and their works of art sent to Rome. So little did the Romans know about such things, that when their general, MUMMIUS, was stripping Corinth of the splendid paintings which hung in the temples, he bade the captains of the ships which bore them to Italy take care of them, "for," said

he, "if they are spoiled you will have to paint them over again."

From far and wide kings and nations now began to beg the friendship of the Romans. That unspeakably mean man, Prusias of Bithynia, thought he had not done enough for the Romans in betraying Hannibal. He went to Rome, clad in rags and with his head shaved, so as to resemble a slave, and licked the dust at the feet of the Senate. Many other kings did the like.

Other suppliants came—old acquaintances—from Carthage. Came to say that Masinissa was plundering them year after year, as he was. He never forgot his early love, or the deep, unchanging hatred he vowed to Carthage when Hasdrubal spurned him, and bartered his beautiful bride against the army of King Syphax, nearly fifty years ago. His love and his wrongs were too deeply graven into his soul; and year after year, as they rose up in his memory, he would rush out at the head of his Numidian horsemen, old as he was, and tear away a province or a city from the side of bleeding, helpless Carthage.

The Carthaginians now besought Rome to shield them from this revengeful old man. The Romans sent over Cato to see what could be done. It is my opinion that Cato, stern and honest as he was at Rome, was much more likely to have lent Masinissa a helping hand than to have hindered him.

When he returned to Rome, he threw down on the floor of the Senate a handful of large ripe figs. The Senators were struck with their size and beauty. "Those figs," said Cato, "come from Carthage, three

days' sail from hence." Then he told the Senate of the wealth and beauty of the country round Carthage, and how the people were rapidly regaining their strength. He ended by saying that in his opinion Carthage must be destroyed.

From that day out he never made a speech in the Senate that he did not end with the words, "Carthage must be destroyed!" That was the one object on which this stern old man had set his heart.

There was no good reason why he should desire the destruction of Carthage. It did no harm to Rome. It sought no quarrel: did not hinder the growth of Rome, or threaten her greatness. The only reason for Cato's wish was, that he hated Carthage. He lived at a time when people of different nations thought it right to hate each other, simply because they were of different nations. It is not so now, as you are aware. A man in this country, for instance, would be very ridiculous if he were to go about crying that England must be destroyed, or France must be destroyed, simply because the French and English are not Americans. And if Cato had lived in our time, and spoke as he did, I think he would have become a laughing stock, and would have found it hard work to get people to listen to him.

In Rome, however, it was very different; and when Cato dinned into the people's ears that Carthage must be destroyed, many who heard him, especially the old soldiers, thought—yes, she must.

An opportunity soon offered. Goaded to fury by the constants inroads of Masinissa, the Carthagin-

ians at last took up arms to defend themselves. Masinissa set up a terrible cry that Carthage was making war upon him, an ally of Rome. The Romans sent an army directly to help him.

When the Carthaginians heard of it, they were very penitent. They sent into exile the Senators who had proposed to take up arms against Masinissa, and promised any thing and every thing the Romans wanted.

The Roman general said he must have three hundred young men of the best families in Carthage as hostages. It caused a dreadful pang to their fathers and families; but the three hundred—the choicest youths of Carthage—were sent, and the Carthaginians hoped that the Romans were satisfied.

The Roman general then said he must have all the arms and engines of war that were in Carthage. The Carthaginians were greatly shocked at this demand. What should they do without arms, they said, when they had so many unfriendly neighbors around them? The Roman replied that he could not help it; he must have the arms. And Carthage, in despair, gave them up.

At last the Carthaginians thought they would have peace. But no. The Roman general now said that the people of Carthage must remove, with all their families, furniture, and property, to a place nine miles from the sea, for the Romans intended to destroy Carthage. The messengers flung themselves at his feet, wept, implored him not to drive them to utter despair; they could not leave their home—the home of their fathers, where they had

been born—the only place they loved. But the Roman said, sternly, that nothing else would satisfy him.

Then the messengers went away to Carthage and told the people of this last demand of the Romans. Such a cry arose in that city as it had never heard before ; and the people who had borne outrage upon outrage, and wrong upon wrong, now rose up under the burning sun and swore they would bear no more. They would not leave their dear city.

All flew to the workshops to make arms. Citizens rich and poor fell to the work, one and all bringing to the workshop all the tools and vessels of iron they had to be forged into weapons. Even gold and silver were shaped into arms, and the young women gave their beautiful long hair to be used as cordage for the ships and the machines. There was as much unyielding heroism in Carthage as there had ever been in Rome.

So when the Romans attacked the city they were driven back ; when their ships sailed up, a party of young Carthaginians, stripped naked, swam to the ships and burned them.

But Fate, like Cato, had decreed that Carthage was to be destroyed. Forth from Rome went young SCIPIO ÆMILIANUS, a son of Æmilianus Paulus, and lay before Carthage with a strong army. The people of the city—it was about as populous as New York at the present time, though it covered more ground—were dying of hunger, but they fought to the death. At last Scipio forced his way over a low part of the wall into the city. Even then, for six

days and six nights, the fight was kept up in the streets, and the pathway was covered with bodies.

Hasdrubal, the Carthaginian leader, gave himself up, and begged that his life might be spared. But his wife, cursing him for his cowardice, seized her children, threw them into a blazing fire, and leaped in after them.

Many of the people did the same. It was not till the whole town was burning that the few survivors surrendered.

Scipio burned the whole city. For seventeen days the fire raged, and whatever the soldiers chose they carried off. Then the charred walls were toppled over, and all that remained of Carthage was a mass of black slimy ruins and ashes.

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CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE GRACCHI.

VERY soon after the fall of Carthage the war in Spain came to an end. It had lasted a long time, the Spaniards fighting with great courage in defense of their country, and many of their chiefs, especially one whose name was VIRIATHUS, showing themselves as good soldiers as the Romans. Army after army had gone out from Rome to subdue Spain, and had been crushed or worn away in the mountains under the arrows and stones of the hardy Spaniards. At last the destroyer of Carthage, the younger Scipio, now finished the contest. He laid siege to the strongest of the enemy's towns, Numantia, and instead of fighting, he girt the place around with trenches and earth-works, in order to starve it out. What the poor Spaniards suffered before they would yield was horrible and heart-rending. They ate all the animals they had, and even devoured the bodies of their children and their dead comrades. When Scipio took the place he only found there a few weak, thin, ghastly spectres who could hardly raise their swords. The town was razed to the earth, and all Spain submitted.

While these wars were being brought to a close, another war was slowly rising to a head. This was the old war between the nobles and the people. You

have seen how Scipio the African set the law at naught, and bore himself so proudly that he was called the Prince of the Senate. Other nobles were only too ready to do the like, and to strip the people of the power they had gained after the long struggles I have related.

Moreover, as these never-ending wars went on, the rich grew richer, but the poor grew poorer. The nobles and their friends helped themselves to all the lands that were taken from the enemy, and set gangs of chained slaves on them to till them. But the poor people, who were forced to go abroad to fight in the armies, often found, when they returned home, that their farms had been sold for taxes, or their houses burned and their cattle stolen by the enemy.

This could not have happened, of course, if the old law for the fair division of the conquered lands had been faithfully carried out. But it was not. When Hannibal was at the gates of Rome, as you may fancy, there was very little thought taken about the division of land; and so, while the people were busy fighting, the nobles easily contrived to lay the old law on the shelf, and divide the lands among them. And though every one saw they had no right to act thus, they were so strong and so united, that no man, for a long time, was bold enough to take the lead in opposing them.

There now arose two brothers, who made it the business of their lives to see the people righted, and to protect the poor against the rich. These were the GRACCHI.

They were sons of an excellent mother, CORNELIA,

a daughter of Scipio the African, and a woman of extraordinary strength of mind and energy. Many stories are told of her in the old writers. It is said that one day a fine Roman lady called upon her, and showed her jewels boastfully, inquiring at the same time what jewels *she* had; whereupon Cornelia called her two sons, and pointing them out to her visitor, answered that they were the only jewels she prized. The story is told of many mothers as well as Cornelia; but there is no doubt she was proud of her sons, as indeed became her.

The eldest of the two, TIBERIUS GRACCHUS, was chosen Tribune of the people. He was mild and gentle, but very determined. He said that the old law must be revived, and all the nobles and rich men forced to give up the public land they had wrongfully seized. A fierce clamor arose at this proposal of his; the nobles flew into a deadly rage, and said they would do no such thing.

To please them, Tiberius offered to let every man keep five hundred acres of the land; and if he had two sons, five hundred more. But the nobles would not hear of any compromise, and would not give up a foot of the land.

Then Tiberius said he was very sorry, but he must carry his point. And he did, in spite of the nobles, and even his own colleague who took their side. His law was passed, and the poor people, who were reduced to poverty by the effect of the wars, got each a piece of land to live on.

They were still badly off, as they had no money to buy tools or cattle. But a crazy king of

Asia, named ATTALUS, happening about this time to die and bequeath all his wealth to the Romans, Tiberius had this money divided among the poor people.

These acts greatly enraged the nobles. They could not get rid of Tiberius in an honest, straightforward way; for the people loved him, and always voted for him at elections. So they resolved to try the old method, which, if the old legends spoke truth, had served them so well more than once.

When election day came round, and the people went to the Capitol to vote, a tumult arose. Some of the nobles tried to drive the people from the place of voting, but were soon put to flight with hard knocks of thick sticks. They ran to where the other nobles were, and spread a report that the republic was in danger.

Then SCIPIO NASICA—the leader of the nobles—called on them to follow him, and rushed into the crowd. They did not use arms; but with clubs, stones, and pieces of broken benches, drove the people back to the edge of the hill, where they were. In the riot, Tiberius tripped over the body of a man who was down, and fell. Some nobles who were close by, began to beat him with their sticks, and one of them striking him on the head with a piece of a bench, killed him on the spot.

Then the nobles had the upper hand, and they made the people feel it. So bitterly did they hate Gracchus that they would not suffer his body to be buried, but threw it like offal into the Tiber. His friends they imprisoned, drove into exile, or killed.

Then they thought they were safe. Not quite yet, however.

At the time Tiberius was murdered, his brother CAIUS was with the army in Spain, with Scipio the younger, the destroyer of Carthage. Caius was a very different man from his brother. Fiery and passionate; gifted with as much energy as his grandfather Scipio the African, and with none of his brother's gentleness. When he heard of his brother's cruel murder, he fell into a deep melancholy. It seemed to have taken away all his vigor; he grew listless, would not have any thing to do with politics, and though he gained fame for his justice and virtuous conduct, shunned public notice, and lived away from Rome.

They say that while he was in this frame of mind, brooding over his great sorrow, his brother's spirit appeared to him in a dream, and called him—"Caius, why dost thou linger? Thou must die, like myself, in defending the rights of the people." And that this dream so troubled him that he forthwith went to Rome and asked the people to elect him Tribune.

All the old hatred of the nobles was now turned against him. Fiercest among his enemies was Scipio the younger, who had married his sister; a proud, overbearing noble who spurned the people as an inferior race of creatures. But Caius was afraid of no one. When he spoke in the Forum, words poured from his lips in a burning flow which nothing could resist; no one who heard that tremendous voice could help but obey its bidding. All his old vigor returned. With the groans of his murdered brother

ringing in his ears, he set about completing his work, and woe to the nobles who stood in his way.

For nearly two years he was the most powerful man at Rome. The division of the public land was carried out; the poor began to be comfortable and happy; new colonies were planted—among others, one on the ruins of Carthage; the nobles were stripped of many privileges which they had wrongfully usurped. So heartily were the people on his side, that when his brother-in-law said aloud in the Forum that Tiberius had been rightly served, some fanatic murdered him that night in his bed.

But all this was only for a time. The nobles were watching him, intent on their prey. They knew that, at some time or other, the favor in which he stood with the people would grow weak, and some blunder would be made by him or his friends that would give them a chance of dealing with him as they had dealt with his brother.

They had not long to wait. Walking through the Forum one day, a man tapped him on the shoulder and begged him to spare his country. Perhaps he was sent and told to say this by the nobles. Caius stared at the man, wondering what he meant; but some of his followers, roused by the insult, fell upon the man and killed him.

Caius was deeply shocked and grieved at the murder. The nobles would not listen to his excuses; but taking the body of the dead man through the Forum in procession, they called the people to witness that this was the first victim of Gracchus. When many were excited, the Consul OPIMIUS, be-

lieving the time had come for the nobles to strike, usurped the supreme power, and bade all the Senators arm themselves and their slaves, and appear next day at the Capitol.

Gracchus knew well what it all meant, and saw plainly that his dream was to come true. He cared nothing for himself; but when he thought of what would become of the poor people when he was dead, he bent before the statue of his father and burst into tears.

His friends were all for fighting, and putting an end to the nobles. The chief of them, FULVIUS FLACCUS—a hair-brained, good-natured fellow—assembled a large number of men, armed them, and marched to the old spot, Mount Aventine. They wanted Gracchus to lead them; but he would not head a civil war, he said, and let them go alone. Afterward, thinking that he ought to share the danger, he prepared to go out. His wife hung round his neck, beseeching him to stay at home; but he sadly unclasped her hands, and went forth unarmed.

At early morning the two parties stood facing each other. Flaccus and his party had been drinking all night, and were noisy and senseless. Opimius and the nobles were not drunk, but were mad with rage and the thought of vengeance. A single word from Gracchus would have been the signal for a deadly fight; but he was for settling matters peacefully.

He sent Flaccus's son—a little boy—to Opimius to propose terms of peace; but the haughty nobles threw the child into prison, and marched forward.

Flaccus and his men were not sober enough to defend themselves: at the very first onset they scattered in all directions, and the battle was over.

Gracchus, seeing how matters were going, left the Aventine, and went to a sacred grove near by. His dream, he knew, had come true; he would not let his enemies have the pleasure of tearing him in pieces. Calling a slave, he bade him kill him ere the nobles found him out; and it was so done.

His body was not cold when the pursuers came to the place. The Consul Opimius had offered as a reward for his head its weight in gold. A man named SEPTIMULEIUS cut it off, and to win a larger reward, scooped out the brain, poured molten lead into the hollow, and bore it to the Consul on a spear. Opimius was so glad to see it that he did not notice the trick, but paid the full weight in gold.

Then the nobles had every thing their own way.

The death of the Gracchi was a cruel loss to Rome. They were perhaps the best men of the republic. I know of none whose aims were higher, whose virtues were purer. They never sought any thing for themselves; and great as their power was, and unbounded their influence over the people, never stained their fame by a single act of cruelty or oppression. Neither in the history of Rome, nor in that of any other country, will you find two nobler characters.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

JUGURTHA. ✓

MASINISSA, the cruel tormentor of Carthage, was dead. After him his son, MICIPSA, had reigned over Numidia, and was dead also. He had two sons, HIEMPSAL and ADHERBAL, and one nephew, JUGURTHA. The sons were weak, helpless youths; but the nephew had inherited all the vigor and the cruelty of his grandfather. He had fought under Scipio in Spain, and was not likely, as you know, to learn gentleness or moderation from that fierce Roman.

When Micipsa died, he left his kingdom to his sons. But some of the people were for having Jugurtha alone to reign over them; and he, in his deep, dark mind, had resolved on the same thing. So, when his cousin Hiempsal—a vain, empty fellow—insulted him, and ill-used him, Jugurtha quietly sent a band of murderers to his house at night, and had him put out of the way. This was the first black deed of his dark career.

Adherbal and his friends flew to arms, and tried to conquer Jugurtha; but he had most of the best troops on his side, and was, besides, a skillful leader and a bold soldier, and Adherbal was quickly defeated. He made his escape to Rome as fast as he could, and begged the Romans to help him against his cousin.

At first, the Romans were for taking the side of Adherbal, and putting down Jugurtha; as, indeed, became their sense of justice. But the nobles had the upper hand—it was only four years after the murder of Caius Gracchus—and they cared nothing at all for right or wrong. When Jugurtha heard that Adherbal had gone to Rome, he sent messengers after him in all haste with presents for the Roman nobles—rich stuffs for one, jewels for another, money for a third.

You remember that when Pyrrhus did the like, and his counselor Cineas offered presents to the nobles of that day, he made nothing by it: some refused his gifts; and those who accepted them were the first to order Cineas to leave the city. It was very different now. The nobles took Jugurtha's presents, and in payment ordered that the kingdom of Numidia should be divided between Adherbal and Jugurtha. Nor was this all. When the Roman officers crossed over to Africa to divide the kingdom, Jugurtha bought them too, and got the lion's share of the country.

Then Adherbal supposed he would have peace. But he little knew the fierce spirit of his cousin. The division was no sooner made than Jugurtha began to try to pick a quarrel with Adherbal; and at last, finding that the latter could not be provoked, boldly declared war upon him.

The Romans, when they heard of it, sent over word that the fighting must cease, and the cousins be friends. But Jugurtha gave the messengers presents, and thus got rid of them. When they were

gone, he entrapped Adherbal into his power by swearing that he would not hurt a hair of his head; and the moment he held him, he put him to death with all his followers.

More Romans were sent over upon this to inquire into the matter, and punish Jugurtha if he was found to blame. But he tried the old plan—loaded the Romans with money and presents; and they went home saying that it was quite a mistake to speak ill of Jugurtha, that he was an excellent man and a virtuous monarch.

This language answered well enough with the nobles, most of whom had sold their souls to Jugurtha. But it did not satisfy the people. Dark rumors of the murders of the Numidian princes had reached Rome, and when the Tribune MEMMIUS proposed that the truth should be found out, all the people cried with one voice, "Yes, we must know the truth!"

So they sent to Jugurtha, and asked him, would he come to Rome and explain matters? He, being bold and venturesome, came directly.

He brought with him bags upon bags of money, and huge piles of presents of every kind: these he began to give to all the chief nobles. After a time he had bought so many that the Senate was ready to do any thing he wanted, and he could not help saying, as he looked at the city, "Rome itself is to sell, if any body wants to buy it."

The nobles had completely the upper hand, and perhaps Jugurtha might have settled every thing to his heart's content, had he been able to control his

fierce hatreds. But finding one of his old Numidian enemies living quietly at Rome, he could not restrain himself: one dark night he sent a party of his servants to his house and had him murdered.

This horrible deed roused the people once more, and Jugurtha had to make his escape to Africa as fast as he could. The Romans, in all haste, sent armies after him. He tried the old method with the generals; but this time he could not succeed. He was forced to fight.

The first two generals that were sent to meet him he overcame; but the third, the Consul METELLUS, won a battle or two. The war was finished by the next leader, CAIUS MARIUS, a very remarkable man, of whom we shall soon hear more.

Marius took city after city, and won battle after battle, till at last Jugurtha fled for refuge to his father-in-law, BOCCHUS, the king of the Moors. There was very little honor or affection among these savage kings; Bocchus took the first opportunity of betraying Jugurtha to the Romans.

He had had his day; neither his courage, nor his cunning, nor his bribes, could avail him now. He was taken to Rome, and dragged behind the chariot of the conqueror Marius at the triumph, his hands chained, and his children, dressed in black, walking by his side.

There was no Æmilianus to intercede for the murderer this time. No one pitied him that we know of; I make no doubt but even now, in the hour of his ruin, he bore himself so haughtily and so defyingly that it would have seemed a mockery to

talk of pity. So, when the procession turned to ascend the hill of the Capitol, they dragged him aside as usual; the trap-door of the underground prison was raised, and they lowered him down with the jailers. When he felt the cold, damp air, he said, with a bitter smile, "What a cold bath this is!"

He needed no fine clothes or jewels now; so the hungry jailers stripped him, and seeing that he wore massive gold ear-rings, would not wait to unfasten them, but wrenched them from his head, tearing his ears, with brutal gibes. Then they left him alone, without light or food, in that dismal place.

Next day, and every day for a week, the jailers returned to the trap-door, raised it, and looked in; then seeing the wretched man stir, and hearing him groan, they closed the trap and went away. At last, on the sixth day, when they looked in, he neither stirred nor groaned; so the jailers lowered themselves down by the ladder and saw that he was dead.

If you go to Rome, you may still go down into that horrible dungeon, and tread on the stones where Jugurtha lay dying, and thinking, repentantly I hope, of his murdered cousins and his wicked life. It is still a loathsome, unclean den, as it was in his day, and you will shudder at the thought that human beings—many far less guilty than Jugurtha—used to be left to die of hunger there.

CHAPTER XL.

MARIUS.

FOR many years after the death of the Gracchi the people of Rome submitted to be trampled by the nobles. They had no great leader to stand up for their rights, and the nobles were so much shrewder than they, that every time they tried to help themselves they only made their condition worse.

While they were sulkily brooding over their sorrows, a new man came forward and asked them to choose him to be Consul. This was CAIUS MARIUS.

It is said that he first got the idea of running for Consul from a Jewish or Syrian witch whom he took with him wherever he went. When he was with the army in Africa, this witch told him that her gods had revealed to her that he would be chosen Consul if he went to Rome. He paid the greatest respect to every thing she said, and went directly to METELLUS, his commander, to ask leave to go to Rome.

Now Metellus was a noble of high family; he despised Marius, who was a poor man's son.

"You run for Consul!" said he, with a bitter laugh; "hadn't you better wait twenty years or so, till my son can be your colleague?"

Marius went notwithstanding, the sneer rankling

in his breast. It was not the first insult he had received from the nobles; you may be sure he remembered it well. And when he arrived at Rome and told the people he was not a noble, but a common man like any one of themselves, and would stand by them forever, and they elected him Consul by an immense majority, I suspect Metellus was rather sorry for the speech.

Marius was not a man to be sneered at. A huge, rough fellow, as strong as a giant: knowing very little about laws or letters, and caring less; but a man of iron will, and so good a soldier that Scipio the younger had said openly that Marius would be the best of the Roman generals when he was gone. This praise he got when quite a young man; but the nobles had kept him down so long, and so unfairly, that he was now over fifty years old.

A story is told of him which shows the control he had over himself. He had painful tumors in both of his legs. After he became Consul, he found them so troublesome that he sent for a surgeon to have them cut out. The surgeon came—some rude butcher, no doubt—and began to cut and hack at one of the tumors. Marius held his leg himself, and during the whole operation, which was long and brutal, never winced or uttered a groan. When the tumor was cut out, the surgeon turned to the other leg. "No," said Marius, "let it be: it is not worth the pain."

More Gauls came pouring down from the mountains and threatening Rome. They were called CIM-

BRI and TEUTONES : came from the north, and were huge men, as the Normans are to this day ; so fierce of mien that the very sight of them had already frightened a Roman army. All Rome now said that Marius was the man to fight them.

Marius set out accordingly, crossed the mountains, and came up with the Teutones near the place where the pretty city of Arles now stands, in the south of France. The Roman soldiers did not like their looks. They had never seen such giants. The Teuton chief was taller by a head than any man in the Roman army, and so active that he could leap over six horses abreast.

Marius made up his mind not to fight till the Romans were used to the sight of the strange warriors. He pitched his tents and intrenched his camp opposite them, but lay quite still. They, burning for the fight, tried hard to provoke the Romans. The chief offered to meet Marius in single combat ; but the rough Roman told him, if he was tired of life, to go hang himself.

Other Teutons sent insulting messages to the camp. "Have you nothing to say to your wives, Romans ?" asked they : "we shall soon be with them." Still Marius would not let a man stir.

At last, when the Romans were quite accustomed to the sight of their enemies, and eager to fight, Marius let them loose, and gave the signal. The battle was soon over. The Teutones were utterly defeated. So many of them were killed, that to this day the place goes by the name of the Field of Corpses.

Then Marius turned about to fight the Cimbri.

They had crossed the mountains and were in Italy waiting for their friends the Teutones. When they saw Marius march up with his army, they had misgivings, and sent him messengers to say—"Give us land for ourselves and our brothers the Teutones, and we will make peace."

"Never mind your brothers," answered the Roman, sternly. "We have given them land already, which they will keep forever!"

Then the battle began under a burning July sun. The Cimbri fought like savages. To prevent their ranks from being broken, the men were chained together with iron chains: their horsemen wore on



A TROPHY.



ANOTHER TROPHY.

their helmets the heads of bears and wolves. But neither the chains nor the shaggy helmets helped them much ; they were beaten and slaughtered like the Teutones. Toward the close of the day the Cimbrian women, seeing that all was lost, strangled their children, and threw themselves under the hoofs and upon the horns of wild oxen they had, lest any Cimbrian matron or maiden should suffer insult from the conquerors.

So Marius ended the war, and erected trophies at Rome. When he went home, and triumphed, no

man could stand against him. Five times the people chose him to be Consul, and the nobles had to submit. They had had the upper hand long enough; Marius made them feel that he was master now.

When election day came round, he ran again, and was chosen Consul for the sixth time. But very soon after his election fortune began to turn against him. He was not a great statesman, and was not able to contend with the cunning nobles. Bad men had gathered around him, and wormed themselves into his friendship: their bad fame hurt him. He was growing old, besides, and the people, who had stood by him for twenty years, were ready to support a younger man.

A war breaking out in Italy with the allies and subjects of Rome—it is called in history the Social War—one army was led by Marius, another by a young noble named SULLA. He was a wild youth, who had served under Marius in Africa, but a man of great energy and vigor. He led his army so well, and showed so much fire and courage, that some people gave him the nickname of THE LION; and the nobles saw at once that he was the man they wanted to oppose Marius. They began to say every where that he was the greatest general of the two.

Envy so preyed upon the mind of Marius at this, that he left his army and shut himself up at Rome in disgust. Soon afterward war was declared against MITHRIDATES, King of Pontus. The question was, Who was to lead the Romans? And the nobles said that Sulla was the man, of course.

When old Marius heard of it, it roused him. They had said he lived like a bear in his den ; but the bear came out now, and very fierce he looked. He went down to the place where the young men at Rome used to meet to leap and run and wrestle ; and old as he was—he was nearly seventy at the time—he ran with the youngest, and not many of the strongest that were there liked to feel his gripe round their body. But it was of no use. The nobles only laughed at him. And the people of Rome being lukewarm, the Senate named Sulla to lead the armies against Mithridates.

But the old warrior was not beaten. He went to the people, and, by tremendous efforts, roused them once more against the nobles. They passed a law giving votes to many tribes which did not enjoy the rights of citizenship ; and by their votes the acts of the Senate were annulled, and Marius was appointed to lead the army instead of Sulla. Marius sent to the army to say he would soon be with them, and would take the command.

But Sulla had not been called the Lion for nothing. If Marius was violent, he was more violent still. When he received the message he flew into a terrible rage, and called his soldiers out, and asked them whether they would submit to be the slaves of the mob at Rome ? They, who were fond of Sulla, and rather liked the prospect of plunder, cried with one voice, “No !”

Then said Sulla, “Let us go to Rome and set these pestilent fellows straight.”

So they marched off, and arrived at the city be-

fore any one knew that they were coming. Marius and the people tried to make some feeble sort of defense; but the Lion, raging like a very wild beast, and threatening to burn the city if hand or foot were stirred against him, the people slunk to their homes, and Marius hastily took ship and sailed to sea.

He started in such haste that the ship had no provisions on board. For some little time she sailed along the coast, Marius and his friends being afraid to land for fear of being taken. But at last the torments of hunger were too great to bear, and they put ashore in a boat.

The spot where they landed happened to be a wild desert part of the coast. Far and wide they wandered without seeing houses or finding food. But they met a farmer, who told them that horsemen were scouring the country on every side in search of Marius. This news frightened them so that they hid themselves in a wood, where they lay all night, half starved and shivering from cold.

The men who accompanied Marius almost lost heart. But he bade them be of good cheer. "This is nothing but a freak of fortune," said he; "the gods have revealed to me that I am to be seven times Consul." His courage could not be broken.

When morning came, they wandered through the country in search of food. Of a sudden two horsemen came in sight and galloped toward them. In desperate haste they plunged into the sea and swam out to a vessel that was passing. The horsemen rode their horses into the surf and shouted to the

captain to send those men ashore. But he was touched by the distress of so old a man as Marius, and refused.

At nightfall, however, he said he could not risk his ship by keeping them on board. Marius landed, and hid himself in a hut by the marshy River Liris. An old farmer took pity on him, and covered him with reeds. But he had not been long there when he heard the tramp of horses, and the sound of loud voices. He knew them well.

Creeping out of his hut, and stripping off his clothes, the old man plunged into the muddy water of the marsh, and waded to a place where the reeds were tall and thick. It was bitter winter, and very few men could have borne such exposure. Rough old Marius stood with the water up to his neck, listening intently for his pursuers.

Soon enough he heard their footsteps and voices. They came nearer, nearer, till the horses splashed the water over his head, and some soldier saw his white hairs through the rushes. With a rope round his neck they dragged him out, all covered with mud and slime; then tossed him into a house which served them as a prison at Minturnæ.

Then they asked each other what should be done with him. One proposed one thing, another something else; but the greater number said the best plan was to kill him, and so make an end of him, and please Sulla. So they called a Cimbrian slave, gave him a sword, and sent him into the room where he was to do the deed.

When first the Cimbrian entered the room he

could not see Marius, as the place was dark. But after a moment he saw through the gloom two fierce eyes glaring at him, and he heard a grating voice growl, "Slave, darest thou kill Caius Marius?" Smitten with terror, the slave ran out of the room, threw down his sword, and said he could not kill Caius Marius.

"Let us send him away and get rid of him," then said the soldiers. So they put him on board a ship, gave him clothes and food, and bade him sail straight to Africa.

The ship landed him on the place where Carthage had stood. It was now all in ruins—a wretched, gloomy old ruin like Marius himself. He sat him down on the stones, gazing darkly at the desolation around him; and for a moment he thought that his heart, like Carthage, was desolate and broken.

He had not been there long when a soldier went to him, and told him the Governor of Africa had said he must not stay there.

"Go to the Governor," he cried, "and say that you saw Caius Marius sitting on the ruins of Carthage."

And he arose, and wandered farther on till he came to a barren island. There he found rest.

While he was there, new troubles broke out at Rome. Sulla was away in Greece fighting, and the nobles having no leader like him at Rome, the people rose in their old way. Every one knew that the right man to lead them was old Marius.

He knew it too, and the moment he heard of the rising he took ship and landed in Italy. Crowds

joined him, and he marched on Rome. People were horror-struck at his appearance. He had not cut his hair or beard since he left Rome; and the gaunt old man, in a dirty, ragged dress, with his fierce eyes gleaming like red coals under his shaggy eyebrows, looked so terrible that men shuddered at the sight of him.

Rome, quaking and trembling, opened its gates. In he marched, thinking of nothing but vengeance on the nobles who had driven him into exile. Most cruelly did he avenge himself. He bade his guards cut down every man whom he did not salute. They, liking nothing better, slaughtered the nobles and the chief friends of Sulla till the streets of Rome were ankle deep in blood. A dreadful day for the city!

Then Marius and CINNA became Consuls. This was Marius's seventh consulship, and his presentiment was thus fulfilled.

But the pleasure of victory over his old enemies was too much for him. For the first time in his life he began to be disturbed by strange fears. He was always thinking of Sulla's return, and fancied he heard a voice ringing in his ears the dismal line—"Terrible is the absent Lion's den." Hideous visions of furies, flapping their loathsome wings in his face, haunted his dreams; and often he thought he saw the ghosts of the murdered nobles bidding him come to the infernal world. In his remorse and misery he began to drink deeply, which, you know, was not likely to make him feel easier. It was, perhaps, a happy day for him when he died, a little more than a fortnight after he was chosen Consul.

CHAPTER XLI.

SULLA.

VERY soon after Sulla had driven Marius into exile he went off to the wars. Mithridates, King of Pontus, was the enemy he went to fight: he had sent an army into Greece—which was a Roman province—to conquer it. To Greece, therefore, sailed Sulla with a strong Roman army.

The Greeks, for the most part, were for Mithridates and against Rome. They had been harshly used by the Roman governors, and fancied that another master would treat them better. So they were glad to see the men of Pontus when they landed, and promised to help them against the Romans.

Athens especially was all on their side, and drove out the Roman officers who were stationed there. Sulla came trooping down and laid siege to the place. The walls were high, the Athenians brave: it held out a long time. While the siege continued, the wits of the city made mockery of Sulla. He was a drunkard, and his face was spotted with red and white blotches; they said he looked like a mulberry sprinkled with flour.

It was a dear joke, as they soon found out. Sulla met the men of Pontus in the field, and scattered them like chaff. Then he took Athens, and ringing in the ears of the frightened people that he would

make them remember the Roman Lion, let loose all his wild soldiery on the beautiful city. He bade them plunder their fill, and not to mind killing any Athenians who got in their way.

More men came from Pontus to help the Greeks, but as fast as they could land the Lion tore down upon them and cut them to pieces.

Then he crossed over into Asia, and did the same there. There was no chance for Mithridates against the bold Roman soldiers and their terrible leader; so he sent to Sulla to beg for peace. Sulla, rather anxious, I fancy, to get back to Rome, granted it on condition that the conquered enemy should give up several provinces in Asia and pay a large sum of money.

It was while Sulla was fighting in Greece that Marius returned to Italy, and made himself Consul for the seventh time. So bitterly did the savage old man hate Sulla that he burned his house, seized his property, and drove his wife and children out of Rome. You may fancy how the Lion raged when he heard of it, and how furiously he fought with the men of Pontus in order to make an end of the war and get back to Rome.

His turn was now come. He wrote a letter to the Senate, saying that he had made peace with Mithridates; reminding the Senators how well he had served his country in the old war against Jugurtha, and in the wars in Italy; going over the history of the war with Mithridates, and showing how he had humbled that powerful enemy, and won ever so many provinces and no end of money for Rome; and winding up terribly — “In return for

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all this you have burned my house, killed my friends, driven my wife and children out of their country. I am now going to take vengeance on you."

The Senators trembled when they heard the letter read as if it had been a real lion's roar in their ears. After the death of old Marius, his son **MARIUS THE YOUNGER** and his friend **CINNA** had held the chief power at Rome. The Senators sent in all haste to Sulla to say that they would be happy to try to reconcile him to these enemies of his. But the haughty Roman sent back word that he wanted no mediators, no reconciliation: he could take care of himself; it would be well for the others if they could do the same.

And he began to march on Rome. Many of the soldiers had heard so much of the valor of the Lion that they went to join him; among others, two young Romans named **POMPEY** and **CRASSUS**, who afterward became famous men. Against him young Marius and the other Consul raised the best army they could, and made ready to fight for the mastery of Rome.

Sulla was in no hurry. He moved very slowly forward, sending small parties of his men to meet the Consuls, and turning over in his mind what he would do when he got to Rome. Over a year passed in this way. At last he advanced sharply on the city. A great battle was fought outside the Colline gate, and his side won the day. The Marians were utterly destroyed.

Then Sulla sent for the Senators to come and meet in a temple outside the walls. They, more dead

than alive, obeyed. Just as they had assembled, shrieks and groans were heard: some of the Senators started at the sounds.

“Be good enough,” roared the Lion, “to attend to me, and not to these noises which do not concern you. It is nothing but a few wretches I am having chastised.”

The sounds were the dying groans of six thousand prisoners whom Sulla’s soldiers were butchering in cold blood.

This was only the beginning. When the Lion entered Rome, he commanded that the friends of Marius should all be put to death. Wherever they were, in the street, in their houses, in the temples, in ever so secret hiding-places, the cruel soldiers found them out and slaughtered them. Young Marius killed himself; his head was brought to Sulla, who gazed at it grimly, and said, “One should learn to row before one tries to steer.” Out of his grave the bones of his father were dug and thrown into the river; for the Lion’s hate was so insatiable that he even begrudged his dead rival’s soul rest in the world of spirits.

When every known friend of Marius was gone, people began to hope that Sulla would relent. But no; the killing went on. Some were slain because they were rich—many because Sulla’s followers wanted their houses—many to please some fine lady or other, who was a friend of Sulla’s.

One of the trembling Senators mustered courage to ask whether Sulla would be good enough to say whom he intended to spare?

The Lion roared that he really had not made up his mind whether he should spare any ; but to oblige the Senate, he would let people know whom he intended to kill. So he made out a list of names of persons to be murdered—it was called a proscription list—and hung it up in a public place, where every man could see it.

With bated breath the wretched Romans crowded round the list, every man in an agony lest he should find his own name there. Those who did, hid their faces and ran away ; but there was no place so dark or so distant that Sulla's fierce soldiers could not find it, and drag their victims out, and chop them down.

Those whose names were not in the list, went away rejoicing, and saying that Sulla was not such a bad man after all. But their joy did not last long. For next day, out came a second list, longer than the first, and on the day after, yet a third. As fast as the proscribed were killed the soldiers bore their heads to Sulla's house, and piled them up in his hall: a ghastly, hideous sight it must have been to see the dim twilight fall through the window in the roof on the dead men's blood-smeared faces and staring eyes. I wonder how Sulla ever dared to go out or in.

At length, when the soldiers were tired of killing, Sulla stopped the massacre. He called the people together, and told them a story.

“A farmer,” said he, “was annoyed by vermin which infested his coat. Twice he took it off, and shook it to get rid of them. Finding them there

still, he took it off a third time, and threw it into the fire. Ye, too, have had two lessons : beware of the fire !”

The poor broken-spirited Romans feebly applauded the story, and promised to take the hint. When the Lion said he wanted to be Dictator—not for six months only, as the law directed, but for as long a period of time as he chose—they said, “Oh yes, by all means, let us choose the Lion Dictator.” And they chose him accordingly.

They went to see him triumph—a grand affair it was, with strings miles long of grand chariots, and splendid horses with gold trappings, and officers in gorgeous armor, and black-robed prisoners in chains and sorrow, and wagon-loads of gold and silver and rich stuffs, which Sulla had stolen in Asia—and very grand indeed looked the Lion himself, as he stood in his triumphal chariot and moved pompously through the crowd. But still, I think, there must have been many a cheek in that crowd that grew red, and many a hand that was clenched, as the bad man passed by with the blood-stains on his face.

Little cared he what men said or thought. As he was the only man in Rome who had any power at all, he took in hand to reform the laws. Hating the people as fiercely as ever, he stripped them of all their rights, made mere puppets of their Tribunes, and set up the nobles in all their old pride and state. And as, in fact, he did not care any thing for the old families, though he disliked their rivals the most, he made nobles of his chief officers, and sent them into the Senate.

From time to time, even when all Rome lay under his heel, his conscience would prick him, and he would shudder at the thought of some of the friends of Marius rising up against him still. When this happened, he would fly into furious rages, and try if he could not do something more to crush them. He made a law that none of their children or descendants, to the end of time, should ever hold office in Rome. He had all their property sold, wherever it was. Even in his sleep their names haunted him, and he would curse them.

One young man, and one only, dared to stand up against the Lion. This was JULIUS CÆSAR, who became so famous afterward. He had married a daughter of Cinna, the friend of Marius. Sulla ordered him to put her away. He had no doubt but Cæsar would obey him. Pompey, to please him, had put away his wife, and married another man's. But Cæsar was made of very different metal from Pompey. Though he was only nineteen at the time, he said that no Dictator should sever him from his young wife: he would keep her, and the Lion might roar as he pleased. The Lion did roar, and was for having Cæsar killed at once. But the Julian family was the greatest in Rome, and Sulla's friends besought him not to quarrel with them. "Be it so," said he, gruffly; "but that young man will give you more trouble than many Mariuses." And he let Cæsar escape from Rome.

Another young man, M. TULLIUS CICERO, who, like Marius, was born in the country town of Arpinum, and who had just begun life as a lawyer, ven-



GATEWAY AT ARPINUM.

tured to appear in Court to plead the case of a man whom one of Sulla's followers wanted to plunder. You may fancy what state Rome was in when this act of Cicero's was thought wonderfully courageous ; and when he himself, after his speech, took no rest till he made his escape from Rome.

They say that after Sulla had slaughtered every one who would not be his slave, and destroyed every law which was not exactly to his taste, he became humane and moderate, and only killed a man now and then, just to divert himself. He grew tired of politics, in fact, and appeared one day in the Forum to lay down his power. Calling the people together, he asked if there was any man there whom he had wronged ? If there was, let him come forward and accuse him.

These bitter jokes were not much noticed by the people, they were so glad to get rid of the Lion. He went away to a country place he had on the Bay of Naples, and spent his last days there, feasting and drinking, and herding with the vilest creat-

ures. Before he had been there long, a loathsome disease attacked him. Sores broke out all over his body, and vermin crawled from them, till it seemed a question which was the most disgusting—his body or his heart.

In his misery a magistrate happened to offend him. In his old way the Lion roared to his guards to put him to death on the spot. But the men who carried out the corpse of the unhappy magistrate were called the moment after to carry their master to his bed. He had broken a blood-vessel in his fury, and died of the injury.

It will give you some idea of the rottenness of Roman society at this time, to learn that all classes of people followed his corpse to the grave, and pretended to be very much afflicted by his death. The ladies of Rome—with many of whom he had been a great favorite—shed showers of tears on the mournful occasion, and went day after day in flocks to strew flowers on his tomb.

He wrote his own epitaph before he died. It was: No friend ever did him a kindness, and no enemy an injury, that he did not repay with interest.

CHAPTER XLII.

SERTORIUS.

HERE and there, during the lifetime of the Lion, Romans had been found bold enough to refuse to submit to him. Not in Italy; he was too powerful and too cruel for that; but away in that distant province of Rome which we now call Spain.

The chief of these bold men was SERTORIUS, a very brave and skillful soldier and a good citizen. Trained to virtue by his mother, on whose farm he had spent his youth, Sertorius had made himself a great name in the wars of the time, in the course of which he had lost an eye. When Marius made himself master of Rome, Sertorius had joined him out of hatred to the nobles and love for the people; but when Marius ordered the nobles to be butchered, Sertorius indignantly reproved him, and fell upon the butchers, and slew them by the hundred. When Sulla returned, and made himself tyrant, Sertorius resisted him as long as he had a dozen men to stand by him, and a handful of corn to eat. Beaten at last, and driven out of Italy, he went away to Africa with a broken heart.

In the Atlantic Ocean, about eight hundred miles from Portugal, lie a group of beautiful islands covered with vines, where grapes ripen under the loveliest climate in the world. We call them the Azores.

The ancient poets, who had dreamy notions of another world, fancied that they were the place where good men's spirits rested after death, and wrote pretty poems about the tranquil happiness of the blessed in these enchanted isles.

Sertorius had read these poems, and I dare say he believed them, for he was a man of a romantic and superstitious mind. He had met with bold sailors too, who had sailed westward in fine weather and had seen the islands with their green valleys and purple hills; and, in a fit of downheartedness, he resolved to go thither, so as to be far away from the selfish nobles of Rome.

But while he was making ready for the voyage Sulla died. Said he, "I will hie to Spain, and see whether there be any hope for freedom there."

So he crossed over, and the Spaniards were very glad to see him, and chose him to rule over them, without minding the Roman Senate in the least. Sertorius governed them well. He appointed a Spanish Senate, and tried to teach the Spaniards that there was something better to do in the world than to fight and hunt. He set up a school too—the people of Huesca still know the spot where it stood—and made all the chief Spaniards send their sons there to learn the Latin tongue, and whatever else the schoolmasters of those days could teach them.

When the nobles at Rome heard of his doings, they said to their general, METELLUS, "Just take a few soldiers and bring that impudent fellow in chains to Rome."

It was much easier to say this than to do it. The

Spaniards were very fond of Sertorius. A band of the best of them gathered round him and took a solemn oath to die with him. They say that many of them believed he was specially favored by the gods, and that a tame fawn which he had brought from Africa, and which followed him about wherever he went, was a god in disguise. At any rate, they liked him a great deal better than the Roman nobles, and as he was a good soldier, and knew every crag, and plain, and brook in Spain, Metellus had very little chance against him. It was a bad business for the Romans when he fell upon them in the mist of the morning or at dead of night, with his bold Spanish mountaineers; and the nobles soon found they were getting the worst of it.

Then said they, "Suppose we send Pompey against him; no one can stand against Pompey."

So Pompey came sailing across to Spain with a great army, and no end of boastings as to what he would do with Sertorius. But when he met him—it was on the bank of the river Xucar—the Spaniards fought so bravely, and Sertorius led them so well, that Pompey was beaten, and might have been finished altogether but for some more Romans who came up to help him just at the close of day.

In the hurry and confusion of this flight Sertorius lost his fawn. The superstitious Spaniards said this was a bad sign, and went away to their tents very sulkily. My opinion is that they were tired of Sertorius, and that the Roman nobles had bought up the chief men among them. For, when the fawn was found again, they still went on murmuring and

sulking, and many of them deserted Sertorius and went over to the Romans.

He punished them cruelly—barbarously. Their sons were at the school he had founded; he seized them, and sold them as slaves. Some of them, it is even said, he caused to be put to death.

He soon paid the penalty for this shocking crime. A vile, treacherous creature named PERPERNA, who had been one of his chief officers, invited him to a grand banquet. He asked to meet him nine Romans, vile creatures like himself, who were in his plot.

When the feast was over, and the apples were on the table, some of the conspirators pretended to be drunk, and began to talk in a coarse, unseemly manner. This they did in order to provoke Sertorius, who was a moral man, and could not bear profligacy of any kind. But he would not be provoked. When they caroused and blasphemed, he turned round on his couch and pretended to go to sleep. Then Perperna took a goblet of wine and threw it on the floor. This was the signal agreed upon. The stoutest of the conspirators flung himself upon Sertorius and pinioned his arms, while the others stabbed him to death.

I am very glad to say that when Perperna galloped off to Pompey with the head of Sertorius in a basket, Pompey received him as so vile a wretch deserved. He would not see his face, but bade his soldiers put him to death instantly as a murderer.

CHAPTER XLIII.

SPARTACUS.

ANOTHER enemy who arose against the nobles at this time, and proved himself as brave as Sertorius, was SPARTACUS THE GLADIATOR.

Gladiators, or broadswordsmen, were slaves and prisoners of war, who were trained to fight with each other in public for the amusement of the Roman people. In our time such amusements would be considered very shocking and barbarous. The Romans saw no harm in them; and as they were very exciting, great crowds of men and women used to flock to the theatre when there was to be a gladiator-fight, just as people flock in our time to hear a great singer; and the ladies clapped their hands and screamed with delight when they saw a strong man fall dead at their feet, his life-blood bubbling out of his nostrils.

Some of these gladiators fought with swords like the Romans themselves. Others carried a strong net, which they tried to throw over the head of their antagonist, so as to entangle him: if they succeeded, they stabbed him instantly with a sort of three-pronged spear they carried. When two gladiators were pitted against each other in the theatre, they fought until one of the two was disabled and overthrown. Then the conqueror turned to the people to

decide whether he should kill the wounded man out-

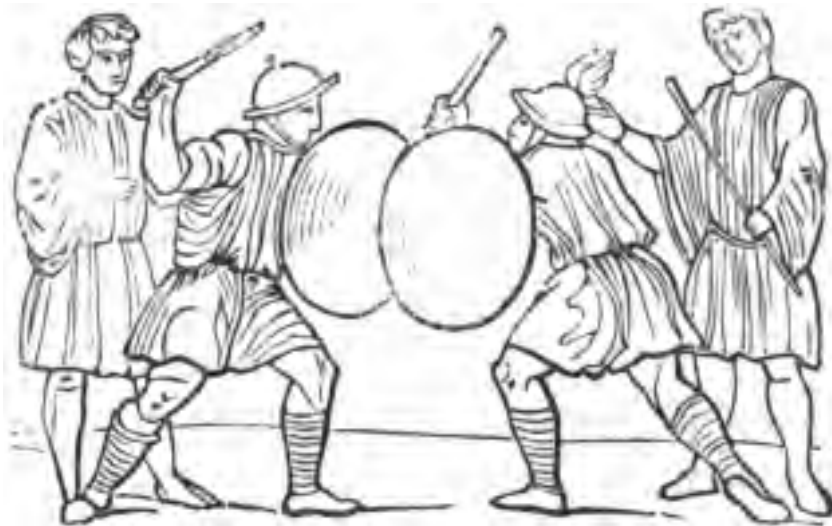


GLADIATORS.

right or not. If the people fancied he had done well, and would be able to amuse them another day, then they pressed downward their thumbs, and this meant that he was to be spared. But if they were not pleased with him, or thought he was too badly wounded to be of any further use, then they raised their thumbs, and the unhappy wretch was put out of pain on the spot.

To train slaves and prisoners for this savage work, the Romans had prison-schools, in which gladiators

were kept and taught to fight. Spartacus, a Thracian, was shut up in one of these prison-schools. He had been taken prisoner in war; and his wife,



GLADIATORS.

hearing of his misfortune, had journeyed all the way from her own country to Capua, where he was. I dare say this brave woman had something to do with the resolution he now took.

Having secretly formed his plans, and won over eight-and-seventy other gladiators to join him, he broke out of his prison-school into the streets of Capua. There was a cook's shop near by: into it the gladiators rushed, and caught up the knives and cleavers and spits to serve as arms, and with these fought their way out of the town. As luck would have it, in the country they met a wagon full of swords and spears. Seizing these, they hastened to the top of Mount Vesuvius, and hid themselves in and around the smoking crater, where no one dared to follow them.

A band of Roman soldiers besieged them there; but Spartacus, falling upon them unawares, routed them, and marched away to the north, summoning all the gladiators and slaves to join him. "If we are to die," said he, very sensibly, "we had better

die fighting for our own liberty than for the Romans' amusement." So thought the gladiators, who came by twenties, and by hundreds, and soon by thousands to march under his orders.

When more Romans attacked him, he defeated them with great slaughter, and ravaged the country far and wide, and spread the fame of his valor even to the city of Rome. He had now one hundred thousand men under him, and plenty of arms and provisions.

"Now," said he, "I will go back to my own dear home in Thrace, where my children are."

But his officers said, Not so. They were strong enough to march on Rome, and march on Rome they would. So off they went, in spite of Spartacus, with about half his army, and met the Romans, and were beaten, and for the most part miserably killed.

In his rage at the news, Spartacus marched down with his men, fell upon the victorious Romans, and beat them. The Romans he took prisoners he divided into two parts, and made them fight as gladiators for the amusement of his army, just to see how they would like it. A just retribution, too.

Still he never thought to make head against all the power of Rome, and even in the hour of victory he was always thinking of escape. More Roman armies coming out to fight him, he hurried away to the south of Italy, and hired boats and ships there to cross over with all his men into Sicily. But when the day came, the sailors betrayed him, and would not ferry him over. On one side one Ro-

man army, under the command of Crassus, was pressing him hard; on another, another Roman army was marching up to inclose him.

He saw there was nothing for it but to fight, and before the second army came up, he turned savagely upon Crassus. When they brought him his war-horse on the morning of the day of battle, he drew his sword and killed him. "If I win the day," said he, "I shall have plenty of horses; if I lose it, I shall want none."

Then the fight began furiously. The Romans were the most numerous by far, and, I dare say, they fought better than the slaves as a general thing. Not better than Spartacus though. Through legion after legion he hewed his way, mowing down the Romans with his terrible broadsword, and calling aloud for "Crassus! Crassus!" But Crassus took care not to hear, and other Romans wounding Spartacus, he fell on one knee. Even then he looked so fierce, and dealt such tremendous blows with his sword, that the soldiers kept at a respectful distance till they had killed him with arrows and darts.

GLADIATORS.



All his men were taken or killed. The killed were the happiest; for all the prisoners were crucified along the roadside between Rome and Capua, and their bodies left to rot and poison the air, as a warning to future gladiators not to follow the example of the brave Spartacus.

None ever did. For five hundred years the gladiator-fights went on in the theatre, and brave men killed each other by the hundreds and the thousands, and the Romans cheered, and the Roman ladies screamed with delight just in the old way, when the sand and gravel at their feet was sodden with blood.

There is a famous statue at Rome of a wounded man leaning upon his hand and slowly sinking into death. Some people suppose it represents a gladiator, and I dare say it does. Perhaps you have read the lines which Byron wrote when he saw it:

I see before me the gladiator lie—
He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony;
And his drooped head sinks gradually low,
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder shower; and now
The arena swims around him—he is gone, [won.

Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hailed the wretch who

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He recked not of the life he lost, nor prize—
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire
Butchered to make a Roman holiday!

CHAPTER XLIV.

MITHRIDATES.

I MUST now tell you the story of **MITHRIDATES**, King of Pontus, who gave the Romans so much trouble about this time.



MITHRIDATES.

Pontus, his kingdom, was a country of Asia Minor. It is a long while now since the Turks conquered Asia Minor, and made it a part of the dominions of the Sultan, as it is to this day. Nineteen hundred years ago—before there were any Turks—Asia Minor was split up into ever so many little kingdoms, which were inhabited by very poor-spirited races of people, and governed by the most absurd and wretched tyrants the world has ever seen. Some of these kingdoms had been overrun by the restless Romans, who had made them Roman provinces, and set over them Roman governors, to rob, murder, and oppress the natives—a kind of work the Romans understood perfectly, and liked above all things. Pontus was another of them; the Romans had not conquered it yet, though they had nibbled it round the edges, biting a bit off here and a bit there, and promising themselves to swallow up the whole some fine day.

But while they were nibbling, there was growing

up at Sinope, the capital, a boy who was destined to make himself very famous by the brave and persevering manner in which he resisted them. This was Mithridates, son of the King of Pontus.

These royal families of Asia Minor were more like herds of wild beasts than men. They were always fighting with each other, and murdering each other in cruel and treacherous ways. In their choice of victims they seem to have given their relations the preference over strangers, and to have taken more delight in murdering their own children or their parents than any one else.

When Mithridates came to the throne, at eleven years of age, his relations set to work directly to kill him. They first tried to poison him. But he escaped this death, it is said, by swallowing large doses of medicine daily as antidotes against poison. Then they tried to kill him openly. This danger he also escaped by spending most of his time away hunting, and also, I dare say, by showing his family that, young as he was, he was strong enough and bold enough to give some trouble to the murderers they hired to kill him. So, neither plan having succeeded, his turn came in course of time, and he showed himself more than a match for his friends at the murder business. He first caught his mother and his brother and cut off their heads; then he choked a score or so of cousins. These little family arrangements completed, he began to reign in earnest.

The business of his life, he soon saw, was to be his struggle with the Romans. Either they must be the masters of Asia Minor, or he must be the

master. He resolved that he would be the master. First, he shut himself up with several learned men, and learned all the languages of the various nations with which he would have to deal; working so hard, and learning so quick, that it is said he taught himself to speak twenty-five languages. Then he raised a great army, and equipped it in the Asiatic fashion.

To train his army to fight, he thought he would knock his neighbors about a little. On one side of him lay Cappadocia. A brother-in-law of his was king there. You know how little this was likely to help him; and you will not be surprised to learn that Mithridates, one fine day, marched into his kingdom, conquered it, cut off his brother-in-law's head, and made his son king in his place. The son not pleasing him either, after a short while he cut off his head too.

On another side lay Bithynia. The Bithynian king was a great-grandson of that Prusias who had betrayed Hannibal to the Romans. Mithridates came marching down against him with fire and sword, but he wisely saved his head by running away and begging for help from the Romans. When he was gone, Mithridates set up a man of his own to reign in his stead; but, like the others, he grew tired of him in a few weeks, and had him poisoned.

This was mere play. The Romans took the part of the Bithynian king, and stirred up another native king to make war on Mithridates. It was just what he wanted. He very soon demolished the Romans' friend, and falling suddenly on the Romans themselves, drove all their governors out of Asia.

Then, on a given day, he commanded the people of Asia Minor to put to death every Roman—man, woman, or child—that was found in the country. You may fancy how bitterly the Romans had made themselves hated by their avarice and oppression, when you learn that this cruel command was joyfully obeyed, and that seventy thousand Romans of all ages were killed in two or three days.

One of the Roman governors, whose name was AQUILLIUS, fell into Mithridates's hands alive. He was set on an ass and ridden round the country, with a label on his breast declaring that the war was caused by his greed and cruelty (which was, I dare say, true in some part), and at last put to death by having molten gold poured down his throat.

Flushed with success, Mithridates sent armies over to Greece, where the Roman governors had made themselves as deeply hated by the people as in Asia. But there they met Sulla (as you heard in the last chapter), who beat them, cut them all to pieces, then crossed over to Asia, and forced Mithridates to make peace.

It cost him so much, what with the men he lost in Greece, and the money Sulla forced him to pay, that he was very nearly ruined. For ten years he could do nothing but plot and scheme, and make ready by degrees for a new struggle. At the end of that time, having raised a new army larger than the first, and armed the men this time in the Roman way—in the vain hope that he might thus infuse into their hearts some spark of Roman bravery—he began the war again.

To give heart to his soldiers, who were very superstitious, he offered solemn sacrifices before marching against the enemy. To the god of the sea he offered a splendid chariot drawn by beautiful milk-white horses, whom he ordered to be driven at full gallop over a high cliff into the roaring waves of the Black Sea. In honor of the god of war he raised on the top of a large mountain a huge pyramid of dry wood, crowned with offerings of milk and honey, and oil and incense. Then, having mustered his whole army around the mountain, he set fire to the pyramid, and feasted and made merry, while the flames curled round the top and rose so high in the air that they were seen a hundred miles off.

But he had better have saved his milk-white horses and his oil and honey, and the rest. For the moment he met the Romans, and they charged, with their shields and broadswords flashing in the sunshine, his whole army took to flight, and the Romans chased them like sheep, killing vast numbers of them, and frightening the others so terribly that they ran out of sight and never turned up again.

Mithridates was greatly disgusted at their cowardice; but, without losing heart, he sent trusty officers throughout his dominions to collect all the able-bodied men they could find, in order to raise another army to fight the Romans again. And so he did; and just as before, when the Romans fell on them with their heavy swords, the feeble Asiatics turned and fled, leaving their king to save himself in the best way he could.

This was almost a finishing blow to Mithridates. He was very nearly caught himself as he rode away after the battle; a band of Roman horse were close on his heels, when he bethought himself of cutting a hole in a money-bag he carried, and escaped while his pursuers were stopping to pick up the gold pieces he dropped.

But his wives and sisters were left behind. In the midst of his agony he remembered them, and called for his chief eunuch. When the eunuch came, he bade him ride for very life to where the women were. "Tell them," said this jealous king, "that me they can never see more. The Romans are coming; say that they must not find one wife or sister of Mithridates alive."

In hot haste over the sandy plains rode the eunuch, starting and looking round at every noise to see if the Romans were not behind him. When he reached the place where the women were, he dismounted, and quickly running into their room, held out a bowstring and a cup of poison, and told them to take their choice. The poor girls screamed and tore their hair in their great distress, and implored the eunuch to spare them a little while longer; but he had no more feeling for any human creature than his master, and put them all to death, in an agony lest the job should not be done before the Romans came.

One of these unhappy girls, a lovely Greek, named **MONIMA**, had married Mithridates only a short while before, and really loved her cruel husband. When the eunuch in his brutal way said to her, "Choose!"

she took the royal fillet which bound her hair and tried to strangle herself with it. It broke; she threw it aside, saying, "It is not fit even for this!" and stretched her head to the eunuch. He wrung her neck as calmly as if she had been a fowl.

All this while Mithridates was riding for his life. He rode and rode till he entered Armenia, where another son-in-law of his, **TIGRANES**, was king. Tigranes was so ignorant a man that he fancied he was the greatest sovereign in the world, called himself the King of Kings, and when he went out, had four captive kings to run in servants' livery before his chariot. He was so proud that he thought it beneath him to know any one who was in distress: he would not see Mithridates, or notice him in any way.



TIGRANES.

But when the Romans sent to him, as they had sent long ago to Prusias, to say, "We must have Mithridates," this haughty king flew into a rage with their messengers because they would not grovel in the dust at his feet, and sent for Mithridates to say he had made up his mind to give the Romans a lesson.

"Beware," said the wise old King of Pontus, "how you attack them. These Romans fight well."

The King of Kings made light of the warning, went out in great state at the head of his armies, and at the first onset ran away with all his men.

After this, he began to think more of Mithridates,

and let him lead his armies. More battles followed; and though the Asiatics ran away whenever they had a chance, sometimes Mithridates managed to make them hold their ground; and the Romans had harder work than before. The people of Asia, who always hated the Romans, annoyed them in various petty ways; and as they quarreled among themselves, and rose against their general, LUCULLUS, Mithridates contrived at last to get back his dominions once more.

While these wars were going on, other Asiatics who lived near the coast, and had been cruelly oppressed and plundered by the Romans, began, like Mithridates, to revenge themselves. They left their old homes, and journeyed to distant islands in the Mediterranean and wild spots on the coast; there they built ships, and armed them, and sallied forth in little parties of three or four to war upon the Roman vessels. The Romans called them pirates. Perhaps they were. But I dare say the poor people of Asia when they saw their children sold into slavery and their houses robbed and burned would call the Romans pirates; and really the name answers as well for the one as the other.

These sea-rovers were terrible fellows, who feared nothing, and kept the whole sea-coast of Italy in constant trembling. Sometimes they would land a boat's crew, seize a few Romans, and keep them on board their ships till they got a heavy ransom. Sometimes they would kill every living creature that fell into their hands. Often when they caught a man who said he was a Roman citizen—it was a

very great thing in those days to be a Roman citizen, as you may see from what St. Paul says—they would pretend to be quite shocked and sorry for what they had done. Some would fall on their knees and beg his pardon. Others would offer to wait upon him. The captain would beg him to forgive them, and would help him on with his cloak or tie his sandals. When the poor Roman had been hoaxed in this way long enough, and said he forgave the sea-rovers—they would lower a plank over the side, and would ask him, with great show of respect, to be good enough to walk down, or else they would have to help him. So they would drown him.

When the news of their doings reached Rome, the people cried with one voice that the pirates must be put down. With one voice too, they said that the man to put them down was Pompey.

Pompey was the favorite of the day. He was handsome, pleasant in manner. He had been the friend of Sulla, and the friend of the nobles. He said now he was the friend of the people. At bottom, there was but one person whose friend he was, and that was Pompey; and a foolish friend even to him. As he had done some fighting, however, in Spain, and was always very lucky in what he tried, it was natural the people should choose him to make an end of the pirates.

They gave him as many ships, and as many men, and as much money as he wanted; and then, for fear he should still want something, they gave him leave to break any laws he chose. They had got used to see their laws broken by this time.

With all his power and his ships it took him only three months to put down the pirates. Some he overcame in battle, and killed; some he drove ashore and burned their ships; and many he persuaded to take to other callings. So there was an end of the sea-rovers.

Then the people cried as before—the nobles crying the loudest of all—that he was the man to make an end of Mithridates too. When Pompey heard of it, he said, “What! will they give me no rest?” But you may be sure this was only a fine flourish, and that no man wanted the appointment so badly as Pompey.

He sailed to Asia with a large army, and fought a battle with the old King of Pontus. Strange to say, the Asiatics did not run away, and it is not quite sure that Mithridates was beaten. But at the next battle his men came to themselves again, and scampered off faster than ever.

Then the old King rode away for the second time to his son-in-law, Tigranes. But the King of Kings was as base as he was proud. He drove his father-in-law out of his dominions, and ran—I wonder whether the four kings ran before him still—to kneel at Pompey's feet, and show what a mean-spirited creature he was at bottom.

Away over the rocks, and through woods—among wild races as savage as himself—and through deserts as parched and forbidding as his own heart, the old King wandered, journeying round the eastern shores of the Black Sea. He journeyed on and on, suffering dreadful privation and hourly danger, till he

reached the Crimea. There—it was then called the Bosphorus—he had long before set up a kingdom, and sent his son to reign over it. This son no sooner heard of his coming than he killed himself, from sheer dread of seeing his father's face.

From Kertch (which was taken the other day by the Allies) Mithridates sent to Pompey to propose peace. Pompey made answer that Mithridates must come himself. He knew the Romans too well for that.

Deserted, ruined, exiled as he was, his great spirit was not broken. He began to train the rough men of the Bosphorus for a great expedition against Rome. There is a rock near Kertch where the people of the place say that Mithridates used to sit watching the stormy Black Sea waves, and turning over in his mind his mighty plans of vengeance.

But fortune was against him. An earthquake shook the country, and frightened the people. He fell ill, and lay for many days in a raging fever. When he arose from his bed, the people rebelled against him, his son, PHARNACES, at their head.

As bold as ever, he met them face to face, put them down, and spared his son—the only one of his family for whom he ever showed any tenderness. Pharnaces promised to be faithful to him forever after, and went out and rebelled again.

The people shouting under his windows that they would have none of him, he fled with a servant and two daughters to a strong tower, where he shut himself up. Pharnaces, with the mob, besieged him there. Then he saw that he could fight with fortune

no longer: he must die. There is a story told of his taking poison with his two daughters, who died of the dose, while their father found that it hadn't the least effect upon him in consequence of the antidotes he had been used to take. But the account of this last family party is very improbable. It is certain that he killed himself, no matter how; and that his son—who inherited his affectionate disposition—had his body packed up in all haste, and sent across the sea to Pompey. Pompey buried it with great honors at Sinope, in the sepulchre of the kings of Pontus.

After this, Pompey had easy work in Asia. His soldiers had only to show themselves, and the natives ran away directly. So Pompey got great glory, and carried off as much treasure as he wanted.

Among other countries he invaded Judea, which was in a very unhappy state at this time, having been eighty years independent, and torn and ravaged by its king-priests. There were two of them now, brothers, who were fighting for the crown. Both asked for Pompey's help. He gave it to the elder, HYRCANUS, upon which the younger persuaded the people of Jerusalem to shut their gates against him. He besieged the place, and took it after a great deal of fighting, in which numbers of the wretched Jews were killed.

But it seems that the killing did not enrage the Jews half so much as Pompey's walking through the temple with his officers, and entering the Holiest of Holies, where no man but the high-priest was allowed to set foot. He, of course, being a Roman,

thought nothing of it, and laughed and joked with his officers, while the Jewish priests were half dead with terror at the bare sight of such profanity. However, to please them, he stole nothing, and this consoled them a little.

In that year, probably during the siege of Jerusalem, there was born a child who afterward became **HEROD THE KING**. He lived a busy and a wicked life, and died bidding his soldiers with his last breath go and slaughter "all the children that were in Bethlehem, from two years old and under." But with all his soldiers and all his cunning, he could not slaughter the child who was that year "born King of the Jews."

T*

CHAPTER XLV.

CICERO.

AND now, it seemed there were very few nations left for the Romans to conquer that were worth the conquering. None of their enemies had been able to stand against them. Wherever the Roman eagles had gone they had been victorious. That little city on the seven hills had spread and spread until all the Mediterranean shores on both sides were subject to it.

But for all this, I don't think the people of Rome were much better off. The nobles made all the laws, and managed matters pretty much as they liked; and bad as they had been in former times, they were now far worse, more insolent, more selfish, more corrupt. They had grown more enlightened and richer of late years, and had come to despise not only the gods and the augurs (which was not perhaps a great pity), but also the example of those great poor men, like Fabricius, who had been the fathers of Roman greatness. Their learning did not do them much good; and their wealth—not very honestly gained, I am afraid—was a positive mischief. Many of the nobles built themselves houses which cost over half a million of dollars, and kept as many as eight and ten thousand slaves to wait upon them.

The richest man in Rome was Crassus. He had made his fortune by buying up the estates of people whom Sulla had proscribed; and as he was very greedy of gain, he followed the trade of a money-lender. Though his wealth was so enormous that the greatest fortunes in this country could not compare with it, he was so mean that, having once lent a hat to a poor friend to go to the country, he took no rest till the friend returned and he got it back.

Then there was Julius Cæsar, who, though poor and very much in debt, was growing an important person. The sea-rovers of Asia had caught him, some time before, and sent word to his family that they must have twenty talents as his ransom.

"Twenty!" said he, when he heard of it; "I am worth more than that. Ask fifty, and when I am free I will fight you, and have you crucified."

He was as good as his word; for the moment his ransom was paid, he fitted out a couple of ships, dashed after the sea-rovers, caught them, and crucified them as he had said.

Crassus was the friend of the nobles, to whom he lent money, and who were very glad to eat his fine dinners, and made laws to suit his speculations. Cæsar was a noble himself, and of very high family; but he rather took the side of the people, and though he was very quiet, and spent most of his time in pleasant company, feasting and making merry, he was watching public affairs with a very keen eye.

But the leading man of the day at Rome was the great orator Cicero. He was so glorious a speaker that the Forum hushed whenever he rose to address



the people; and to this day his speeches are among the best young orators are taught to study. He was, besides, a gentleman of fine feelings and high honor; a philosopher also, of rare depth and learning. Too much, perhaps, of a gentleman and a philosopher for the rough times in which he lived, and lacking that iron will and boldness which make men strong.

Him the nobles chose to be Consul, though he did not belong to their class. They supposed, of course, that he would do their work.

While he was Consul, a very strange plot was formed at Rome. What its real object was, and who the conspirators were, we can not tell now. But it seems certain that a band of wild, reckless persons—idle, worthless nobles, old soldiers, city vagabonds, and others of the same sort—did form a plot to overthrow the government. The chief conspirator

is said to have been **SERGIUS CATILINA**, or, as we call him, **CATILINE**. It has always been the fashion to abuse him heartily, and to call him all the hard names in the dictionary; I dare say he was a wild sort of fellow, who led a profligate life, and was ready for any mischief. But I wish, for my part, that he had told us his story, so that we might have heard both sides. I shouldn't wonder if Cicero and his other enemies, when they had him down, made him out to be a much worse man than he was. However this be, the story they tell is this:

Soon after Cicero became Consul, strange tales were told about Catiline having wanted to kill the Consuls. Well, these blew over, and people were forgetting them, when a young woman named **FULVIA** went to Cicero in a mysterious way, and said there was a great plot on foot against the government, and that Catiline was at the bottom of it. She said she had heard this from one **CURIUS**, who was her lover, and was in the plot. Cicero bade her say nothing, but try to worm the whole secret out of this talkative lover of hers. Meanwhile he went about Rome himself, whispering to every body that Catiline was a shocking character and ought to be sharply watched.

When Fulvia had brought him more stories about the plot, and he thought he knew enough, he made a terrible onslaught on Catiline in the Senate. Catiline denied every thing, and said, if the Consul was afraid of his doing harm, he was willing to place himself in the hands of any Senator who chose to keep him as a prisoner.

Cicero answered, "We do not think it safe to have thee in the city, and dost thou expect us to take thee into our houses?" A very fine answer, no doubt, but better suited for a theatre than a Senate.

Among other things, the woman Fulvia told Cicero that two of the conspirators would call at his house on a certain night to kill him. Of course, when they came, they were told Cicero was not at home for them. They went away, saying they would call again. This, too, is uncommonly like what we see at some of our theatres.

However, it chanced that some people did rise in the country near Rome and made a great noise. Cicero had been expecting it, and had made ready one of his grandest speeches, full of the most beautiful figures of speech and flowery language. When the news reached him, he rushed to the Senate, where Catiline was, and burst out with this splendid speech. When he had ended, Catiline, who was taken aback by so fierce an onslaught, rose to reply; but the Senate would not listen to him. The members shouted, and stamped, and hooted, and hissed, till he ran out of the building, burning with shame, and rage, and revenge.

Whatever he had intended up to this time, Cicero and the Senate had now left him no choice how to act. Bidding his friends LENTULUS and CETHEGUS remain in the city, he took horse and rode away to the people who had risen in the country.

There were at Rome at this time a party of Gauls who had come to make a treaty with the Senate on behalf of their tribe. Lentulus—who seems to have

had no sense at all—went to these Gauls, and said to them: “We are going to upset the government; suppose you make your treaty with us. If you will help us in our plot we will agree to what you want.”

The Gauls, in their plain way, said they would think of it, and went and told Cicero the whole story. Cicero persuaded them to pretend to agree to the proposal, but to insist on getting it in writing, signed by the chief conspirators. Lentulus was such a simpleton that he wrote out his proposal, and signed it himself, and got eight of his friends to sign with him.

Cicero got the paper, of course, and arrested all the signers directly. Then he went to the Senate, where he made the Senators’ blood curdle by telling them of the horrid schemes of the conspirators, and how they were all to be butchered in their beds, and how Rome was to be burned, and so on. They, scared out of their wits, cried that the prisoners should be put to death. Julius Cæsar, who was not so easily frightened as the others, was for sparing their lives; but CATO, the leader of the nobles, said that nothing but their death would satisfy him.

So said most of the nobles. Cicero accordingly went out and had them all strangled without a trial. He did so from weakness, not from cruelty; but still, he ought to have known better.

Against Catiline, who had gathered some twenty thousand men together, and was trying to make his way into Gaul, the Senate sent off two armies. They soon entrapped him, and cut off his retreat.

Driven to bay, he fought them bravely, and was, of course, utterly defeated. His own body was found where the fight had been thickest, with a stern frown on his brow.

This was the end of the plot, and I must say it was cheaply put down, considering the noise Cicero made about it. I am not very sorry for Catiline, for he was not a virtuous, or in any way a pleasing character; but for Cicero's sake, I wish he had been dealt with somewhat differently.

The people of Rome, who had not forgotten those dreadful times when Sulla and Marius entered the city with fire and sword, were in ecstasies with Cicero. When he went into the Forum, after having the nine conspirators put to death, and exclaimed in a solemn voice, "They have lived!" every body shouted for savage joy. In the Senate, nothing too complimentary could be said of Cicero. Cato declared he was the father of his country.

I am afraid this flattery spoiled him, and turned his head. He began to fancy himself a great conqueror, and wrote as much to Pompey, who never forgave him for the letter. He made speech after speech hours long to the people, reminding them of what he had done, and proving how great a man he was. They grew a little tired of it at last, and though they cheered him when he gave up the consulship, and cried, "I alone have served the Republic!" they never raised him to power again.

Rougher men than he were needed for these times. Pompey was on his way home from Asia at the head of his army; and the poor people at Rome were in

terror lest he should do as Sulla had done. I am very glad to say he did not. He sent his soldiers each to their homes, and entered Rome with a few friends only. Instead of thanking him for sparing them, the stupid nobles took the first opportunity of quarreling with him, and making an enemy of him.

Cæsar, too, came sailing home from Spain about the same time, and was chosen Consul. The nobles didn't like him either, nor he them. To oppose them, he made a league with Pompey and Crassus against them.

Then a new tussle began for the mastery of Rome—Cæsar, Pompey, and Crassus on the one side, and the Senate and nobles on the other. The nobles struggled might and main. In their old way they brought their hangers-on and slaves into the Forum, and tried to bully Cæsar; but he was as bold as he was wise, and they got the worst of it.

Cæsar wanted Cicero to join his side, and tried hard to win him over. But he could not succeed. Cicero was an irresolute man, who was always trying to do right, but never could make up his mind exactly as to what was right and what wrong. While he was weighing the matter, a sad trouble befell him.

There was a festival at Rome which was kept every spring by most of the women of the city. It was a secret festival, at which no men were allowed to be present, and was celebrated in a very mysterious way in the Consul's house with closed doors. A wild young Roman noble, named CLODIUS, who had

fallen in love with one of the ladies who were to go to the festival (it was Cæsar's wife, and he put her away in consequence), contrived to get inside the house in woman's dress. The women detected him; and the people, who were terribly shocked at his impudence, insisted on his being tried for the offense.

When the trial came on, Clodius swore that he had been away in the country on the day of the festival. Cicero, hearing the false oath, went forward directly and said that Clodius had sworn falsely, that he had met him in Rome on the very day. Clodius was acquitted, his family being rich enough to buy up the judges, and he vowed vengeance against Cicero.

To wreak it, he got himself elected Tribune of the people, and straightway accused Cicero of having put nine Roman citizens to death without a trial.

If Cicero had come forward manfully and called the Senators to witness that they had ordered the conspirators to be put to death, and had said boldly that what he had done he would stand by—I am sure Clodius would have been beaten. But instead of this, he acted in a very feeble, irresolute manner. First, he asked Pompey to protect him—Pompey, who never befriended any one in distress. When he found that Pompey wouldn't help him, he put on mourning and went into the Forum to beg for pity. His friends the Senators put on mourning likewise, and were as mean-spirited as any thing you can imagine on the occasion.

Clodius had no pity for him, but wrought early and late, with threats and bribes and tremendous

exertions, to induce the people to condemn him. Browbeaten and bullied by this vindictive man, Cicero at last lost heart altogether, and fled to Greece, leaving all his property to be seized and his house to be burned by his revengeful enemy. It is very sad to read the doleful letters which he wrote about this time, and to think that so gifted a man had so little manliness.

— When he had gone—Cæsar soon afterward setting off for Gaul—the Tribune Clodius was left the master of Rome.

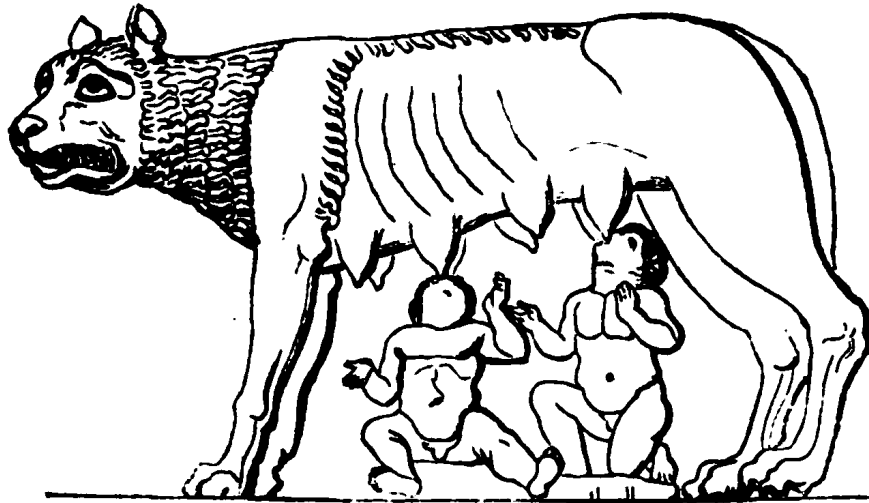
END OF VOL I.

A
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OF
ROME.

BY JOHN BONNER,
AUTHOR OF "A CHILD'S HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CHAPTER XLVI.

POMPEY.

CLODIUS was more like a madman than the ruler of a great city. When he had burned Cicero's house, and sold his property, he liked the wicked work so much that he hunted up other weak men who could not resist him, and treated their houses and property in the same way. He kept a band of gladiators and ruffians, who followed at his heels when he went out, and were always ready to fight at the word of command from their master. And all the while, though every one knew that at heart he cared for nothing but money and pleasure, he pretended to be extremely religious, and was always setting up or furbishing temples to some god or goddess.

At bottom the people never liked him. They

hated his family (he was a descendant of the bad Appius Claudius, who was one of the Ten Men, and also of blind Appius Claudius); and when they saw what a ruffian he was, they hated him too. To spite him, they said, "We must have Cicero back again." Pompey also—who didn't care any thing for Cicero, but who thought, perhaps, that so able a man would be a help to him in his schemes—was of opinion that Cicero ought to be sent for.

Clodius stormed and raved like a maniac when he heard of it. Up and down the streets of Rome he swaggered with his ruffians at his back, insulting every man whom he suspected of being a friend of Cicero's, and bawling that he would protect the Republic from traitors. In open daylight he made nothing of burning down the house of one of Cicero's friends; and when he heard that another—the Tribune MILO—had declared that he would send for the great orator, he swore he would kill him whenever he met him.

Milo was as violent as Clodius. He hired gladiators and ruffians, too, and when he walked through the streets they followed him, clanking their broadswords and shouting. Whenever Milo met Clodius there was a fight, and some of the ruffians on both sides got killed. So well did the people know them, that whenever either of the two appeared in the streets, quiet folk ran into their houses and barred the doors.

For all his bluster and violence, Clodius could not help Cicero coming home. His friends—and the people had come to hate Clodius so much that he

had a great many now—went out to meet him, and cheered him, and capered for joy, and gave him a fine house to make up for the one Clodius had burned.

But the tumults and the street fights went on still. Pompey turned against Milo, and Cato against Pompey; and each had his friends, and hired ruffians, and slaves, who were ready to fight, burn, and destroy at the first opportunity. The nobles hated the people more than ever, and the people hated the nobles. The honest citizens at Rome must have spent many a sleepless night in these dreadful times, wondering where it would all end.

Pompey, for his part, felt sure it would end in his becoming sole master of Rome. When election day came round, he sent a party of his ruffians very early in the morning to the polls, with orders to let nobody vote who was not for Pompey and Crassus. Away they went, and, of course, by the evening it was known that Pompey and Crassus were chosen Consuls.

After the election Pompey said to Crassus, "Do you go to Asia and look after our enemies there, and I will stay here and take care of Rome." And Crassus answered, "With all my heart." For he knew that there was a fine chance for making money among the rich nations of Asia, and he cared very little for power in comparison with riches.

Away he went sailing to Asia with a great army, and plundered province after province, and state after state there. They say that he robbed the temple at Jerusalem, among other places; this is quite

likely, though not certain. But at last, his insatiable greed for money was the ruin of him.

There was at this time a very singular nation in Asia called the Parthians. They were warlike and brave, but also fond of luxury and splendor. Their kings used to paint their cheeks, and perfume themselves like women; and they lived in a style of extraordinary magnificence.

When Crassus heard of their great riches he resolved to plunder them too. He told one of their chiefs who came to see him that he would march to their capital city. "Sooner," said the Parthian, holding out his hand, "shall hair grow on the palm of this hand than thy eyes shall behold Seleuceia." Crassus made light of the warning, and marched into Parthia. On and on over the burning plains, under a red-hot sun, he marched, till his soldiers were ready to drop from thirst and exhaustion, and even Crassus' greed could hardly keep up his strength and courage. Then, while the Romans were panting and fainting, the Parthians attacked them. Their way of fighting was singular. They had great troops of horsemen armed with light javelins and bows and arrows, and mounted on horses that went like the wind. These horsemen would hover round the Romans like mosquitoes, harassing them, and cutting off small parties: when the Romans turned to attack them, they would lash their horses and tear off; and while the horses were at full speed the riders would turn round and shoot their arrows, or throw their javelins with such surprising aim that they hardly ever missed,

After Crassus had fought one battle and lost a great many men, the Parthian general asked him to a feast, in order, as he said, to arrange matters. He, poor simple man, went; and while he was admiring the splendid way in which the Parthian lived, and his mouth was watering at the sight of the wealth and luxury he saw, he was stabbed to death. The Parthians cut off his head; and their cruel chief pried open his teeth, and poured molten gold into his mouth, saying, "Thou wast greedy of gold, now glut thyself!"

I suspect this was what Pompey wanted. He was head man at Rome now. Clodius and Milo went on fighting as usual, till one day they met in the country at some distance from Rome, and fought it out, and Clodius was killed. A good riddance! Then Pompey had Milo arrested for the murder and tried; and when he heard that Cicero was to defend him, he sent down a party of soldiers to surround the court, which shook the nerves of the poor orator to that degree that he lost his voice, and couldn't utter one of the fine phrases he had prepared; and so Pompey got rid of Milo by sending him away into exile.

Pompey now thought that the only thing he required to secure the mastery of Rome forever was to please the people. To do this, he built a great theatre—the first stone theatre ever set up at Rome. It was not at all like our theatres, as it had no roof, and the people sat on bare stone or wooden benches, rising above one another in a half-circle. It was so large that forty thousand people could find room in



ACTORS' MASKS.

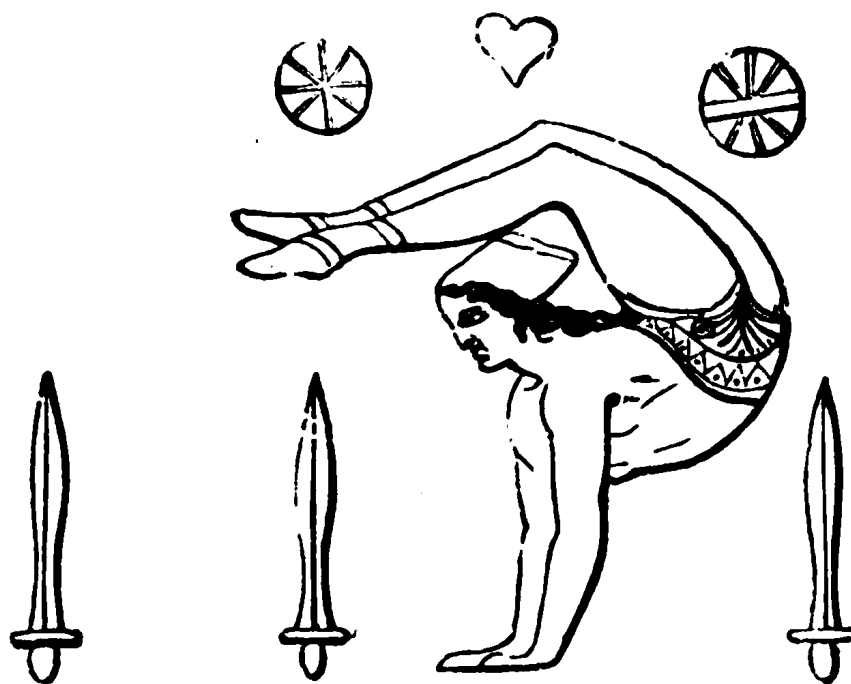
it, and so strongly built that you may trace the shape of its walls in the houses which stand on the spot at the present day.

The spectacles which Pompey gave in this theatre



A BUFFOON.

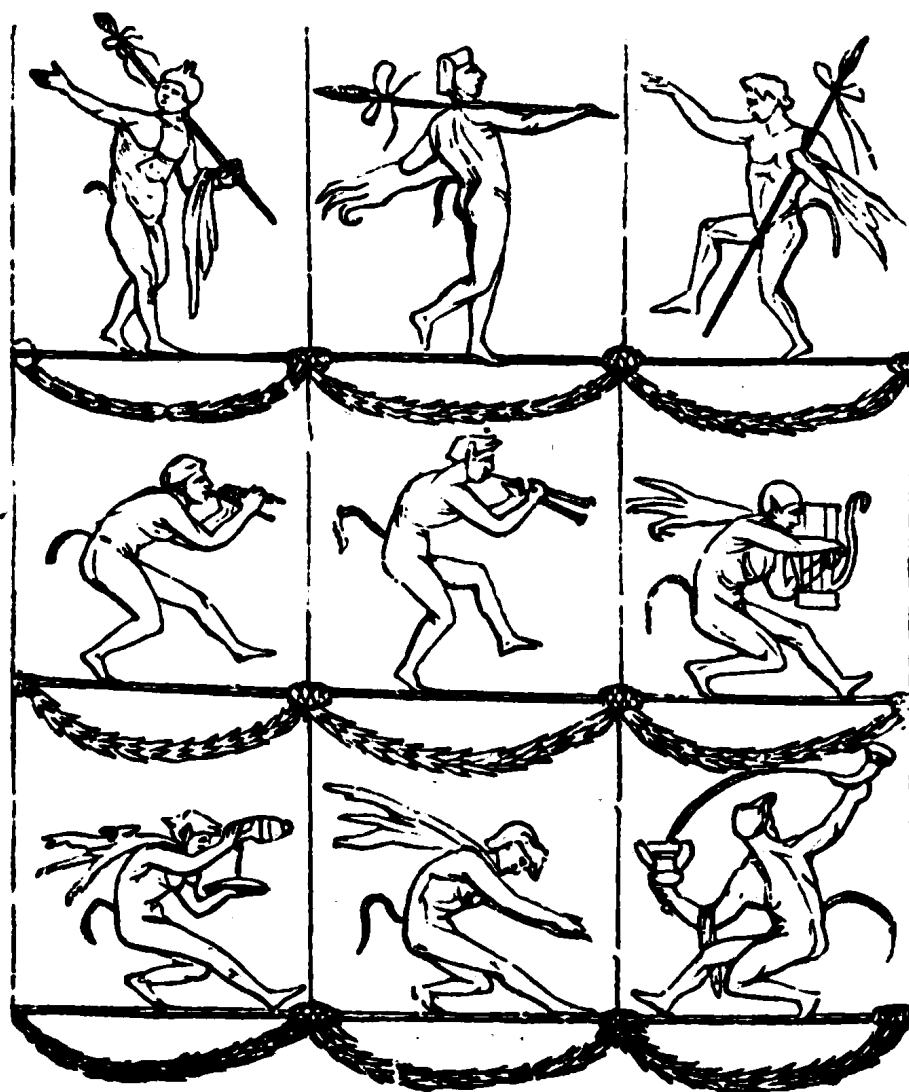
were very grand, and cost immense sums of money. He had five hundred lions brought from Africa, and let loose upon the stage, roaring and raging from hunger, to be killed by hunters in the sight of the people. Also a number of elephants and a rhinoceros, who were hunted down in the same way; and hundreds upon hundreds of poor Scythians and Gauls, and other foreigners, who were forced to butcher each



A TUMBLER.

other in the old cruel fashion. He gave plays, too, in which buffoons made sport for the people, and farces were acted by men in queer masks; but the people liked the lion-hunts and the man-fights best, and sat from early morning to dark in the theatre to watch them, with nothing but a biscuit and a handful of grapes by way of dinner. These sights pleased them so much that they let Pompey do what he pleased with the government. He had it all to himself, in fact.

All this time Cæsar was away in Gaul. The Romans gave the name of Gaul to a very large extent of country: Northern Italy, France, and part of Germany, all went by the name of Gaul, and their inhabitants were called Gauls, though they were composed of a hundred different races and nations. Gaul, then, was a wild country, mostly covered with dark forests, and trackless plains, and vast marshes, where cities have since sprung up, and railroads have lately been built. The people of the north were unlike the people of the south; and the wild sea-



ROPE-DANCERS.

faring men of the west bore very little resemblance to the fair-haired giants of the east. But they were all alike in some points. They all loved their homes, liked fighting, and hated the Romans.

So Cæsar, who only went to Gaul to fight and to get the name of a great general, very soon had plenty of fighting on his hands. On his right, on his left, behind him and in front of him, were great armies of Gauls, who fought him at every inch of his journey. Sometimes they pressed him so hard that his men lost courage. Once, they said positively they would go home. "Go!" cried Cæsar, "I will go on if I have no soldiers left but my own

tenth legion." They, shamed out of their intention, staid with him.

Brave as the Gauls were, and vastly as they outnumbered the Romans, they were generally beaten. Cæsar was a superior general to their leaders, and the Romans were better armed than they, and fought in a more skillful manner. So the way of the war was generally this: in the spring Cæsar would suddenly take the field, fight a battle with the nearest Gauls, and then race across the country with wonderful speed, destroying every thing on his road, and breaking down the bridges, till he came up with some more Gauls and beat them too. Then he would fly off in another direction, and do the same again. He moved so quickly that half the time the Gauls never knew where he was, and were often attacked and cut to pieces when they hadn't the least idea the Romans were near. By the end of the summer he had usually overcome all the different tribes, and would go to Northern Italy to spend the winter.

But when the ice began to melt and the grass to grow green, the Gauls would rise, and all the work had to be done over again. Nine years they rose in this way year after year: the Northerners rising when Cæsar was in the south, and the Southerners rising the moment he went to the north. They might be beaten over and over again; but conquered, never.

One brave fellow named **VERCINGETORIX** (though some people think this is only the name of the office he held), fought with great courage against the Ro-

mans for years. At last, his people being utterly defeated and ruined, this noble chief advised them to give him up to Cæsar in order to obtain better terms for themselves. So they did. And the Gaulish hero was dragged in chains from place to place, and shown off at the triumph, and at last, I am afraid, cruelly put to death by the hard-hearted Romans.

There were, no doubt, many other brave Gauls like Vercingetorix; but as they had no writers to tell their story, we don't even know their names. All that we can learn is, that season after season the Gauls rose and rose again, and fought with such spirit that Cæsar did not venture to say that Gaul was subdued till he had killed over a million of them, and laid waste the country from the white cliffs of Dover, in Britain, to the pasture-lands of the Pyrenees, from the pretty lakes of Switzerland to the beach of the stormy Atlantic.

It was high time now for him to think of Rome, where Pompey had made himself very powerful. The nobles were great friends with him (though I can not help thinking they always disliked him in their hearts); and between the two the state was governed in as wretched and corrupt a manner as you can imagine. You may form some idea of the state of things from the fact that, for money, a decree of the Senate could be forged; and certified too, on oath, by as many nobles and augurs as were wanted. I am not much surprised at the augurs, as that sort of thing was rather in their line; but the nobles must have sunk very low when the heads

of the great families would perjure themselves for a bribe.

Cæsar had once been friends with Pompey, as you remember, and had given him his daughter JULIA to be his wife. It is pleasant to find that, even in these times, though Pompey hated Cæsar and Cæsar was suspicious of Pompey, they never quarreled while Julia lived. Cæsar loved his daughter, and Pompey was a good husband; each bore with the other for the sake of Julia. But, as ill luck would have it, while Cæsar was away in Gaul, she died. Then these two men began to speak ill of each other openly, and to strive for the mastery.

Pompey had the nobles on his side, Cæsar the people. Cato, who was still the chief of the nobles, said that if Cæsar dared to come to Rome he would have him tried. You know what this meant, and how easy it was to condemn a man whom the nobles wanted to put out of the way. The people kept quiet, being afraid of Pompey's soldiers, who were in great force in the city.

To entrap Cæsar, Pompey sent word to him to come to Rome. Cæsar answered that he would rather not. He was very comfortable where he was, in Northern Italy.

Then Pompey ordered him to disband the army he had brought from Gaul, and send every man to his own home. Cæsar said he had no objection to this, but Pompey must also disband his army. Pompey indignantly refused.

The quarrel going on, the nobles—as blind as usual—outlawed Cæsar, and sent out word north

and south, east and west, that he was a public enemy, and must be put down. One Senator who had a little sense left, asked what they should do if Cæsar were to march on Rome?

“Do!” cried Pompey, who was growing old and was a little weak in the head, “Why I have only to stamp my foot and legions will spring up to march under my orders.”

When Cæsar received intelligence of what had been done at Rome, he called his soldiers together and asked them if they would stand by him. With one voice they cried, “To the last drop of our blood!”

“Then,” said he, “we have trifled long enough; let us march to Rome.”

They say that when the army reached the bank of a little river called the Rubicon—no one knows where it is or what it is called now—Cæsar faltered, and stood a long while on the bank, in doubt whether to cross or no: and that at last he plunged in, exclaiming, “The die is cast!” I am afraid the story was invented by some clever person long afterward; for Cæsar had a great deal too much sense to hesitate now, and especially on the bank of that little stream.

At Rome they were in great dismay and commotion when they heard of his coming. Pompey, I suppose, was stamping his foot; but the operation didn't answer as well as was expected. The people hung back, and showed no particular anxiety to help the nobles against their old friend Cæsar. As for the nobles, they packed up their money and their

treasure, and made haste to leave Rome and join Pompey, who went to the southern part of Italy.

On came Cæsar, southward. City after city opened its gates to him, and the people showed how glad they were to see him by feasting his army. One place, where a band of nobles had gathered together, held out for a while; but Cæsar soon fought his way in, and took it. The nobles who had defended it expected to suffer horrible deaths; but he set them all free with kind words.

Then he entered Rome at the head of his army. People were a little afraid at first that he might imitate Marius and Sulla; but when they found that not a man was hurt, and that Cæsar did not even plunder the houses of the nobles, they flocked into the streets with their wives and children, and danced for joy, and almost worshipped Cæsar.

Pompey had run away to Greece with his army. Cæsar, having, in his old dashing way paid a flying visit to Spain and beaten Pompey's generals there, made ready to cross over into Greece after him.

For this he wanted money, of course, and went to the treasury to get some. On this, a young noble named METELLUS, who was Tribune of the people, and had staid in Rome, thought there was a fine chance to help his friends and delay Cæsar. So he went to the treasury and stood before the door with the key in his hand. When Cæsar's officers came, he said he would not give up the key or open the door. Cæsar said, very quietly, "Break open the door." Metellus put his back against it, and said, in a grand way, that they must kill him first; knowing very

well that, as he was a Tribune of the people, his person was sacred, and Cæsar would not like to provoke the people by killing him.

Cæsar looked straight into his face with a stern expression, and touching his sword, cried, "Stand aside, young man; for, let me tell you, it is easier for me to do than to threaten!" Which was quite enough for young Metellus.

Cæsar then crossed over with a part of his army into Greece. The others were to follow as soon as a chance offered to escape the ships of war which Pompey had sent to watch the coast. They were very long in coming, and Cæsar, losing patience at last, set out in a small boat to fetch them. A storm arose, and the little boat was tossed so terribly that the boatman began to be afraid. "Fear nothing," said Cæsar, "thou carriest Cæsar!" It was a grand speech, no doubt, but it didn't help the boat sail, or calm the waves; so Cæsar, who knew he would drown just like any common man if he was long enough under water, sensibly put back.

After a while the other soldiers did cross, under their general, MARCUS ANTONIUS, or, as we say, MARC ANTONY; and Pompey and Cæsar began to march up and down, each trying to put the other into a disadvantageous position. Pompey had the best of this sort of work. His army was well fed; the nobles who were with him had plenty of money, and lived as luxuriously in the camp as they might have done in their fine houses at Rome. Cæsar's men were nearly starved. But they had such faith in Cæsar that they lived cheerfully on salad made

out of grass, and said, one and all, that they would gnaw the bark from the trees before they let Pompey escape.

At last, some time in June, in the year forty-eighth before the birth of our Saviour, the two armies lay opposite each other on the plain of PHARSALIA, in Thessaly. They were to fight it out at last. On Pompey's side, the nobles made sure of the victory. Before the battle they quarreled about the offices each was to have when they went back in triumph to Rome. The greatest dispute of all was, who was to be high-priest after Cæsar (who had been high-priest during all these years of fighting) was beaten and killed. Some sent to Rome to take good houses. Others made ready for a grand feast to be eaten after the victory; had couches laid in tents, the ground strewed with flowers and leaves, and great jars of rich old wine plunged in water to cool.

Cæsar's men said nothing of victory, but when the time came, fell on with might and main. They were old, tried soldiers, far steadier than the rabble Pompey had collected. The nobles fought well, as usual; but when Cæsar ordered his spearmen and archers to aim at their faces, these delicate young gentlemen were mightily disgusted, and rode out of the reach of the spears and arrows. Their comrades following their example, the day was won, and Pompey was beaten.

The moment the nobles turned to fly, Cæsar ran in among his men and ordered them to spare the Romans. He would not let a prisoner be hurt.

And next day, when he went over the field of battle and saw how many of his countrymen lay stiff and dead, he was deeply grieved, and cried, "They would have it so!" as indeed they would.

After the battle was lost, Pompey took horse and rode away through the dark night—not so dark though as his fortunes—to the sea-shore. There he embarked in a boat and bade the sailors ferry him over to Lesbos, where his fifth wife, CORNELIA, was. She, too, had been anxiously expecting the news of her husband's great victory, and planning in her own woman's mind many petty schemes for the time when she should be the first lady at Rome. There was no time now even for sorrow. Away they sailed up the Mediterranean till they came to Egypt.

Swiftly as Pompey had fled, the bad news flew quicker, and by the time his vessel cast anchor on the Egyptian shore, the King of Egypt had heard every thing, and had made up his mind what to do. On the shore where Pompey would land a platform had been raised, and on this platform sat King PTOLEMY with all his court, in grand array, their dresses flashing in the sunshine, and their faces all smiles.

As Pompey lowered himself down over the ship's side, his wife, Cornelia, felt an inward warning of danger, and besought him to stay. But he, smiling sadly, took leave of her, and bade her cheer up. As he landed, he saw a soldier whose face was familiar to him. "Friend," said he, "methinks we have served together." At that moment the chief courtier

of King Ptolemy gave the signal, and Pompey was stabbed in the back. He did not start or speak. Calmly drawing himself up to his full height, and pulling his cloak over his face, he stood silent till the murderers cut him down.

King Ptolemy had his head cut off—his body he left naked on the sand to be buried stealthily at night by a faithful servant—and when Cæsar arrived he sent it to him, with such a sneaking message as a detestable wretch of his sort might invent. Cæsar burst into tears at the shocking sight, and had the murderers sought out and put to death.

There is but one of Pompey's friends whose story is worth telling. This is Cato, of whom you have heard already. He is not a pleasant man, though he was prodigiously virtuous, in the Roman way. His idea was, that he and his friends ought to have all the power in the government. If he had got this, I dare say he would have been quite satisfied, and would have led an edifying life. It is true that he stole a trifle when he went to Cyprus, but this was for the state, not for himself; also, that he sold his wife to a friend, and repented of the bargain and bought her back again—which is not exactly what we should like our leading men to do. Still, the Romans thought a great deal of Cato, and always spoke of him as a very superior person.

He left Rome with Pompey, and after the battle of Pharsalia went to Africa, where he tried, in a feeble sort of way, and very unsuccessfully, to make head against Cæsar. For some time he wandered about, dreamily hoping for something to turn up

that would restore the nobles to Rome in all their glory ; but as nothing ever did turn up, but, on the contrary, things grew worse from day to day, he at last resolved to die, at a place called Utica.

He spent most of the night reading the works of the great philosopher PLATO ; slept soundly for a short time, then rose and stabbed himself. In falling, he threw over a piece of furniture. The servants ran into his room, picked him up, and dressed his wound while he was insensible. When he came to himself he snatched the bandages from the wound, and it is even said tore it open with his hands, so that his entrails gushed out, and he died.

CHAPTER XLVII.

CÆSAR.

POMPEY dead, and his murderers—not the real murderers, but the poor soldiers who were instigated to do the deed—being executed for the crime, a quarrel very soon broke out between King Ptolemy and Cæsar. Ptolemy was so vile a creature that Cæsar would naturally feel tempted to knock him about a little; but the outward cause of the dispute was a lady.

One day a man went to Cæsar and said, with many compliments in the Eastern fashion, that he had a present for him. The present proved to be a bale of fine rich cloth. While Cæsar and his officers were admiring its beauty, the man began to unroll it in their presence, and all at once, out of the inside of the bale there leaped the most lovely young lady these Romans had ever set eyes on. They were greatly surprised, as you may well imagine; more surprised still when the charming creature who had come to them in so droll a conveyance told Cæsar that she was CLEOPATRA, the rightful queen of Egypt, whom her brother—who was also her husband—King Ptolemy, had despoiled of her share in the kingdom. She came, she said, to see whether great Cæsar would not help her back to her throne again. So winningly did she plead her cause, and so lovingly looked

at Cæsar out of her large soft eyes, that he, with a round oath, swore he would see her righted. And really I don't see how he could have acted otherwise under the circumstances.

So he sent one of his officers to Ptolemy to say, "You must take your sister back again, and make her queen as before."

Ptolemy and his courtiers, who were to the full as thick-headed as the great stone sphinxes before their doors, said they would do no such thing.

"Then," said Cæsar, "I must make you."

He had hard work at first, as he had not many of his brave Roman soldiers with him; and Ptolemy and his officers attacked him with a great multitude of Egyptians. Once they very nearly caught him. At the storming of Alexandria the boat in which Cæsar was fighting began to sink. The Egyptians, seeing his distress, pressed him harder than ever. But he leaped into the water with his armor between his teeth, and holding in his left hand, high above the water, the roll of paper bark on which he wrote his journal, swam safely to another vessel, and fought on as before.

In the end the Egyptians got the worst of it. A great battle was fought, in which King Ptolemy and a number of his courtiers were killed; and after this, those who remained were very glad to make peace.

Then Cæsar and Cleopatra did nothing but feast and make merry together from morning till night, and very often from night till morning again. They sailed together on the Nile in gorgeous boats with gilded oars, and silken sails, and bands of musicians

playing soft music as the boat glided smoothly over the water; and when evening came, went home to the palace and feasted royally, and spent a great part of the night in revelry. I do not know how long this idle pleasant life might have lasted—for Cleopatra was so bewitching that Cæsar couldn't tear himself from her—but for a war which suddenly broke out in the old place—Pontus in Asia.

It was Pharnaces, Mithridates's son—the same who, as you remember, had been in so great a hurry to send his father's dead body to Pompey—who had risen against the Romans. Cæsar must have astonished him. While he was thinking how he should manage to drive out the Romans, Cæsar tore into Pontus like the wind; while he was wondering where he ought to fight a battle, Cæsar fell upon him, and scattered those wretched soldiers of his; while he was trying to make out what would happen next, Cæsar conquered the whole kingdom, and Pharnaces was quietly put out of the way, no one knows how. So the war was ended, and Cæsar, who was not a man of many words, wrote an account of it to the Senate in three only. They were: *Veni, vidi, vici*—in English, I came, I saw, I conquered.

There was a Moorish king, named JUBA, who took it into his head about the same time to take up arms against Rome, pretending to be very much the friend of Pompey, who was past help long since. Cæsar fell upon him too, in the same way, and made an end of him without any trouble; then returned to Rome, where he had not been since he left to fight Pompey in Greece.

The people all turned out to meet him, and received him with great joy. They had suffered so much—poor people!—of late years, and had been so debauched and corrupted by the wicked example and selfish oppression of the nobles, that there was very little Roman spirit left among them. You might have searched a long time among the gentlemen and ladies who took the air in Sacred Street or in their country gardens for the old Roman sort of man.

Cæsar was the man of their heart; and when they found that he was not only good, but strong enough to put down their old oppressors the nobles, they worshipped him, and fawned upon him, and seemed to try what they could do to spoil him. They first made him Dictator for ten years, then for life. They begged him to make all the laws, and manage the



A ROMAN MATRON.



A ROMAN REPUBLICAN.



A ROMAN LADY OF FASHION.



A ROMAN OF THE AGE OF CÆSAR.

government, and appoint all the public officers. If any one said, "I think Cæsar would like to have such or such a thing," they rushed, in a frantic manner, to give it him.

Some people have blamed Cæsar very much for yielding to the people in these respects, and have said he was ambitious, and so forth. He would, no doubt, have been a greater man if he had refused the monstrous power the people heaped on him, and tried honestly to set the republic on a solid footing once more. But in all the history of the world there is only one instance of a man in Cæsar's position acting in this noble manner. GEORGE WASHINGTON is the only man of ancient or modern times who, having the means to make himself master of his country, either as king, or with some other title

meaning the same, resolutely refused to do so, and thought more of freedom for his fellow-countrymen than of power for himself. And there is this difference between the position of Washington and that of Cæsar. The Americans, whose rights Washington would have usurped if he had made himself king, were a sturdy, manful, moral set of people; quite capable of governing themselves, and not at all anxious as a body to give up their freedom, though possibly they might have been led into doing so if Washington had desired it, through their love for him. Whereas the Romans, I am sorry to say, were at this time generally corrupt, wicked, and careless of freedom. They had been brutified by oppression; they had so often seen the laws broken and mended and broken again in a few months, that they had ceased to respect them; and besides, they had no religion to trust in and fly to for solace and strength. Their own, which was not much of a religion to speak of, and would not have been much help to them at any rate, was fast breaking down and becoming a laughing-stock; and nearly fifty years had yet to roll over before Christ was to come, and centuries before the pure truth which He taught was to shed its light upon the wretched city of Rome.

Altogether, I think there is a great deal to be said in excuse of Cæsar; though, of course, it is a great pity that he employed his genius and his virtues in completing the ruin of the republic.

As soon as he became master of Rome, he set himself to mend the old laws, and to make many new ones, all of which were good. The best thing

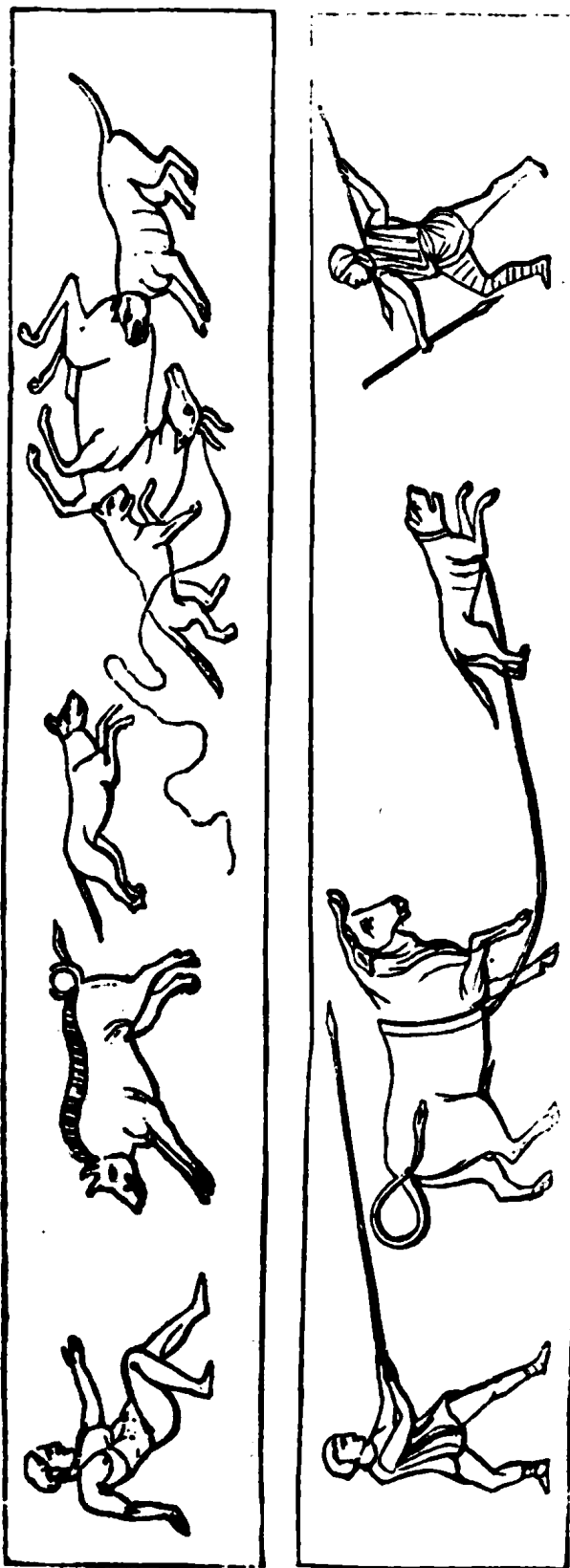
he did was trying to unite all the various races under Roman authority into one people. To accomplish this, he appointed several of the best Gauls and Spaniards to the Senate, and invited them over to Rome to help to make the laws which were to govern them.

Nothing annoyed the proud Roman nobility so much as being forced to sit down with Gauls and Spaniards, whom as foreigners they affected to despise. They sneered at the new Senators, and insultingly hoped they would be able to find their way to the Senate-house.

To please the people Cæsar gave them shows grander than any thing they had ever seen before. He had his triumph as usual, at which ever so many kings and princes were dragged in chains, and all Rome rang with the gleeful shouts and songs of the soldiers as they pranced through the Forum. To each soldier he gave a sum of money—about seven hundred and fifty dollars—and to every citizen twelve dollars and a bag of corn. Then there was a grand feast, at which three and twenty thousand tables were spread with meat, and fish, and sausages, and hundreds of jars of sweet wine mixed with honey; and every man who chose was bidden to lie down on the couches before the tables and eat his fill.

Of lion-hunts, and elephant-hunts, and man-fights in the theatre, there was abundance, day after day. And one afternoon, while the people were gathered in the theatre, and the summer sun glared so fiercely overhead that many of them nearly fainted with the

heat, of a sudden a huge awning, of the richest



WILD BEAST HUNTS.

silk and of a hundred bright colors, was spread over the theatre, so as to shade the whole — spectators, fighting men, and wild beasts.

Then the field of Mars—which was a great plain or park—was hollowed out, and water poured in till a lake was formed. Upon this lake small ships were launched and filled with gladiators; and at a given signal one half these ships fell upon the other half, and the wretched gladiators drowned each other and butchered each other till the ladies of Rome almost expired with delight, and the new-

made lake was crimson with blood.

When Cæsar went home at evening, after one of these shows, he had a body-guard of forty elephants, each with a castle on its back filled with crystal

lamps, lighting up the narrow streets of Rome, and turning the night into day.

These grand shows delighted the idle Romans to such a degree that they grew crazier than ever about Cæsar. "Suppose," said they to each other, "we make him king; he would like it, perhaps." And one of them went to him and hailed him king.

"I am not king," said he, "but Cæsar."

Still, he didn't seem very angry at the name. So, at a wild sort of festival the Romans used to keep, that wild fellow MARC ANTONY, who was capering naked through the streets of Rome with other boisterous fellows, tried to put a crown on Cæsar's head in the sight of the people. On the spur of the moment the people, who hated the sight and name of a crown, though they bore the substance of royalty cheerfully enough, set up a loud outcry, and Cæsar pushed it from him. Reluctantly though, I am afraid.

All this while the nobles had never left off hating him. Though he had forgiven them all they had done against him and against Rome; though he had not hurt a hair of their heads, or stolen an atom of their substance; though he had—well knowing how they would have killed him and outlawed his family if they had had the upper hand—raised many of them to places of honor, and trust, and profit; still they hated him—hated him more than ever. In their bad hearts his goodness and his generosity only made their spite rankle and burn the more fiercely. Some of the worst among them now laid a plot to murder him.

But when they met together, one of the most cunning of the wicked crew said, "It will never do for us to kill Cæsar; for the people would straightway tear us limb from limb. We must get some one whom the people will respect to help us, and then we can say we killed him because he wanted to be king."

So they looked about for some one that was respectable, and they found JUNIUS BRUTUS. Brutus was a very curious person. He was a man of a morose and gloomy temper, and a cross-grained disposition. A great reader he was: he read too much, in fact, I think; too many tough Greek books about philosophy, and too many Latin books of the same dry, dull kind, which did him no earthly good, and only made his temper gloomier and his intellect cloudier. He had been, in the old time, one of the nobles' party, and had fought under Pompey at Pharsalia.

But after the battle, when Cæsar asked him to be his friend—for his mother's sake, whom Cæsar had dearly loved—and poured upon him gifts and honors and kindnesses of every kind, Brutus changed his mind about the war, and thought Cæsar was right, and joined him. He became one of Cæsar's principal officers, and was treated so kindly by him, that people said he could not have done more for his own son.

But after a time Brutus again fell into his old habit of nursing dreary ideas, and brooding gloomily over the times. There was enough at Rome, Heaven knows, to brood over with sorrow. But

the misfortune was that Brutus, from the reasons I have mentioned, could not see where the real fault lay, and, in a very wrong-headed manner, began to blame Cæsar for the debased state of Rome. What with pondering this extremely absurd notion, and what with the hints he got from his old friends the nobles, he came to hate Cæsar bitterly. It was then the conspirators went to him, and said, cunningly, that Cæsar was going to make himself king, and would Brutus submit to that?

Then he brooded more gloomily than ever, and read more and more dull stuff out of his tough books. The cunning conspirators, who knew him well, never let him alone for an instant. One day he found a note for him containing some such words as—"Brutus, art thou asleep?" Again, he would find written on his door—"Art thou Brutus? No, thou art not Brutus." Of course, when he told these things to the conspirators, they pretended to be very much surprised indeed, and wondered who could write such things.

At last, when these wicked men had so wrought upon the diseased mind of Brutus that he was almost mad, they said to him, "Now help us, and we will kill Cæsar." And he said he would.

Then said they, "Let the deed be done in the Senate, and the day the Ides of March."

As the time drew near, numbers of persons heard of the plot. A fortune-teller bade Cæsar beware of the Ides of March. CALPURNIA, Cæsar's wife, besought him not to leave her that day. He, laughing merrily at her fears, said he would stay at home

if it would make her happy. So he sent Antony to the Senate in his place.

But the conspirators were not to be baulked. They sent to Cæsar to say he was wanted for business of importance. He rose directly, got into his litter, and was carried on the shoulders of his slaves to the Senate-house.

When he entered, the hearts of the wretched murderers misgave them. Some one whispered in Cæsar's ear; which so frightened the chief conspirator, CASSIUS, that he half drew his sword to kill himself. Pale and trembling, with hang-dog looks, they pushed one another forward till they were all gathered round Cæsar's ivory chair. CIMBER presented a petition to Cæsar. He rose, either to receive it, or to see why they were thronging round him. Cimber seized his robe and pulled him down, and at the same moment CASCA stabbed him in the side. He sprang up, tried to defend himself with the iron pen with which he wrote (it was very different from our pens, more like a long pencil tipped with steel), and struggled violently. But when he saw Brutus strike at him with his sword—Brutus, whom he had loved like a son—he groaned “You, too, Brutus!” and covered his face with his robe. Then the murderers all struck and hacked at him, wounding each other in their blind fury, and killed him at last, with three-and-twenty stabs. Only a little while before he had set up a statue of his old rival Pompey in the Senate-house; it was at the foot of that statue he fell, spattering the pedestal with his blood.

I am sure that long ago your opinion of the Roman nobles was so bad that hardly any thing could make it worse. But in all their long race of mischief and evil they never did so foul a wrong as this. In all Roman story there is no man like Cæsar. So dashing and successful a soldier, or so wise a lawgiver. So staunch a friend to the people, so unyielding a foe to that selfish nobility that would have enslaved all but their own class. So true to his friends, so humane and forgiving to his enemies. So fond of doing good and making people happy; so slow to punish, so averse to cruelty of any kind.

Cæsar succeeded in every thing he tried. He was an eloquent speaker and a sound lawyer. He composed verses which are said to have been good, and wrote one of the best histories that have come down to us from ancient times. He was a learned astronomer: before his time the Roman year was all confusion; he arranged the months as we now observe them, and fixed to each the proper number of days: in memory of which, and after him, we call our Calendar the JULIAN CALENDAR, and the seventh month of the year—in which he was born—JULY. No one could talk so pleasantly as he: there was a fascination in his manner, and a genial kindness in his conversation, which no one—man or woman—could resist.

If he had but refused the dictatorship, he would have been worthy to stand by the side of Washington, above the splendid army of heroes who have ennobled the world.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

ANTONY.

THERE was a dreadful silence in the Senate for a few moments when Cæsar fell; then the Senators, in a great agony of mind, all ran home to hide themselves. The murderers ran away too, to the Capitol, where they locked themselves in; and Cæsar's body was left where it lay, with the blood trickling from the wounds upon the floor of the Senate, and the sunbeams gaily dancing round it, till three of his slaves gathered it up, and tremblingly carried it home on a stretcher. All day long the people of Rome, among whom the bad news had soon been whispered, stood waiting at their doors in terrible suspense, wondering what would happen next.

After a while Brutus went down to the Forum and made a speech to the people to prove that Cæsar was a tyrant, and had been rightly murdered, and that black was white, and so forth. The people, knowing very well who the real tyrants were, would hardly listen to Brutus, and murmured to each other, "Where is Marc Antony? He was Cæsar's friend; why does he not show himself now?"

Marc Antony—as you will see as we go on with this story—was a good-tempered, jovial fellow, with very little honor, or principle, or manliness in him.

When his friend Cæsar was killed, he ran away and put on the dress of a slave so as not to be recognized. After a time, gaining heart, he showed himself in the streets, and the conspirators going to him, and saying, "Antony, you are on our side, of course," he answered, Yes, he was, and asked the chief murderer Cassius to dinner that very day. Cicero was on their side too, though he knew nothing of the murder beforehand: he said, after it was done and over, that it was a god-like act. And considering the character of his gods, I dare say it was.

But when Antony contrived to get hold of all Cæsar's money, he began to think he could do better without the conspirators than with them, and burst all at once into the most frantic affliction over his poor dear friend, Cæsar. He had a waxen body made, and dressed in Cæsar's bloody robe; and over this, in the Forum, he made a most affecting speech to the people, stopping every now and then to cry, then bursting out with more expressions of grief, till the people's feelings were harrowed to frenzy. Then he drew from a fold in his robe Cæsar's will.

This will bequeathed to the public Cæsar's beautiful gardens in the city, and gave to every citizen a sum of money, about equal to twelve dollars of our currency.

When Antony read it, and the people saw how truly Cæsar had loved them to the last, they rose with a great cry of "Vengeance! vengeance on Cæsar's murderers!" Some seized torches to burn their houses, others sought them out to kill them. One poor fellow who bore the same name as one of the

murderers, was caught in the tumult, and by mistake torn limb from limb. The real murderers had run away and hid themselves.

Then Antony made himself master of Rome. With the money he had found in Cæsar's house, and other money he stole from the State Treasury, he bought up the leading men, and began to rule like a king. A poor miserable king, though. He still kept up the pretense of paying great respect to the Senate; but when he didn't like the laws passed by that body, he quietly altered them, or forged new ones. And with all his power, and all his money, he contrived to make both the nobles and the people hate him.

Cicero was the first who had the boldness to attack him. He made a number of speeches against him, which he called Philippics; and used all the tremendous power of his eloquence to convince the Romans what a worthless creature he was.

A more powerful enemy still was a little pale lame boy, with weak eyes, clumsy tongue, and not over strong heart, but as crafty as a fox, and cruel as a wolf. This was Cæsar's nephew and heir, OCTAVIUS, whom I shall call by the name of AUGUSTUS, which he took long afterward. He was away with the army when his uncle was killed. When he heard of it, he went to Rome and demanded his inheritance, which Antony had seized and spent in great part. Little Augustus, with his downcast eyes and shuffling speech, was easily bullied by bold, swaggering, blustering Marc Antony. But he pretended not to mind it. He sold Cæsar's houses and land

and his own too, and with the money paid every man the twelve dollars Cæsar had left him.

This made him as much liked as Antony was hated; which was just what he wanted. Then, while Cicero, who was really growing brave in his old age, thundered away at Antony in the Senate and the Forum, he schemed and wrought secretly to injure him, till, in the end, it came to blows between them. Antony had his army, and Augustus his, and the two armies fought and slaughtered each other till the northern part of Italy—where the war was carried on—was almost a wilderness.

At last Augustus, in his crafty way, sent to Antony to ask would he make friends, and agree that they two, with LEPIDUS, who was a stupid, coarse-minded soldier, but had a great army under his orders, should make a league together and rule Rome?

Antony said he had no objection, provided they would let him kill Cicero.

To this Augustus answered, Antony might do what he pleased with Cicero, if he would only let him kill Lucius Cæsar, who was Antony's uncle.

Lepidus said that, for his part, he would agree to any thing, if Antony and Augustus would let him kill his own brother. And they said, "Oh! by all means."

So all three sat down together in a little Italian village, now called Bologna—big, rough Antony, the unwholesome boy, Augustus, and stupid Lepidus—and began to make a list of persons to be killed. They wrote on and on, each adding a name in turn, till Antony and Lepidus could think of no more;

then Augustus threw in an extra batch—his memory was very good indeed—and the list was closed with twenty-three hundred of the best names of Rome upon it.

To prevent quarrels between them, they agreed to govern Rome jointly, and to call themselves “THE THREE MEN.” Three Brutes would have been a fitter name. Each of the three was to have a share of the republic for himself. But they were all to help at the killing of the proscribed persons, and Antony and Augustus were to hunt down the murderers of Cæsar and make an end of them.

Having finished the wicked bargain, they started for Rome, and the killing began. It would be wearisome to tell you how they accomplished the bloody work ; how the twenty-three hundred—and many more besides—were hewn down in the streets, in their houses, in cellars, and in garrets ; how men stepped out of their homes, suspecting nothing, and were stabbed on their own threshold ; how, in the cruel agony of those dreadful times, fathers gave up their sons, and sons their fathers ; how faithful slaves gave themselves up to save their masters, and were slaughtered with bitter gibes ; how all Rome rang with the wails of the widows and orphans, while Marc Antony was stuffing himself and getting drunk ; and Augustus, with his winking eyes and sallow face, was biting his nails and thinking it was well done.

Before the Three Men had reached Rome, Cicero, guessing what would happen, left the city with his brother for Greece. Falling short of money on the

road, his brother went back to Rome to raise some ; and there the butchers found him and killed him. Then they sent a band of cut-throats to kill Cicero, who was at his country house. It is very affecting to find that Cicero, who was always a good man, was a brave one at this terrible crisis. He refused to leave his house. "Let me die," he said, "in my own dear country." His slaves seized him by force, put him in a litter, and hurried toward the sea-shore. On the way the band of cut-throats overtook them. The slaves drew their swords and would have fought to the last for their master. But Cicero sternly forbade them to strike a blow. As the cut-throats came rushing up, he stretched his gray head out of the litter, and they hewed and hacked at it till they severed the neck. The right hand too, they cut off, and bore it, with the head, to Antony.

They say that after gazing at the livid face with delight, he sent it to his wife, FULVIA, one of the worst women in Rome. She had the mouth forced open, and the tongue torn out ; and amused herself by piercing with her long hair-pin the tongue which had told the truth so boldly about her husband. A ladylike pastime, and worthy of her !

All this while Brutus and Cassius and the conspirators had been in the East, acting after their kind. They said they were great friends of liberty, and got together a band of soldiers, and tyrannized over the poor people of the provinces in the most atrocious manner—driving the people of one city to burn down their houses, and throw themselves and their children into the flames in the depth of their

despair. Other cities they robbed like very highwaymen. However, Brutus went on reading his dull books, and moping and grumbling about the wickedness of the world, and quarreling with sour, snarling Cassius, and making friends again day after day.

One night as Brutus sat in his tent, he fancied he saw a huge spectre appear at the door, and gaze at him with sad, heavy eyes.

“Who art thou? and whence dost thou come?” asked Brutus.

“I am thy evil genius,” answered the spectre, in a hollow voice: “we shall meet again at Philippi.”

We know very well nowadays that persons whose minds are diseased as that of Brutus was, often fancy they see spectres and ghosts, and talk with them. But in all his tough books, Brutus had not learned this, and he was very much startled and disquieted by his vision.

As it happened, when Antony and Augustus led their armies to fight the conspirators, Philippi was the place at which they met. There a first battle was fought, and the conspirators were beaten. After the battle Cassius went into his tent, and never came out again: when some soldiers went in they found his head cut off.

Brutus fell back a short distance with the rest of his army, in a very unhappy state of mind. While Cassius was living he was always quarreling with him; now that he was dead, he called him the greatest of the Romans, and did nothing but mourn over his death. His soldiers wanted to desert him.

Brutus offered to let them plunder two rich cities near by if they would stay. "Then," said they, "if we stay we must fight to-morrow." Brutus didn't want to fight for fear of being beaten; but the soldiers were firm, and he consented. You will not be surprised to hear that he saw the spectre again that night in his tent, gazing gloomily at him, and shaking its head.

When the morning came, the bugles sounded for battle. It did not take long to rout Brutus and his army. When the day was lost, some officers went to him and said, "We must make our escape as fast as we can." "Yes," answered Brutus, in a half-choked voice; "but with our hands, not with our feet."

He went into a wood with a few friends, and staid till evening, in great distress of mind, repeating over the names of the great Romans who had committed suicide. As night fell he asked some one to kill him. All refused. At last STRATO—a Greek, whom Brutus employed to read the Greek authors to him—said he would do the deed. Turning away his head, he held out the point of his sword, and Brutus rushed upon it and died instantly.

Only a day or two before, he had written a letter, in which he said that, come what might now, he had done his part in the world. It was quite true, and a very bad part it had been. I have seen some books in which Brutus is praised. Shakspeare has done so much with his wonderful genius to represent him as a patriot and a man of virtue that he often passes for one; but the real Brutus was not

more like Shakspeare's Brutus than an owl is like an eagle.

Brutus had a wife, a very famous lady in her way, and well suited to her husband. Her name was PORCIA: she was a daughter of the Cato who killed himself at Utica. Before Cæsar's death she had noticed her husband's low spirits and gloomy temper, and, woman-like, wanted to know the reason. He would not tell her his secret. Whereupon she wounded herself deeply with a knife, and bore the pain and fever which the wound caused without a word of complaint, in order to prove to her husband that she could keep a secret. Well, after Cæsar was killed, and his murderers, with Brutus at their head, were obliged to run away from Rome, this strong-minded lady staid there, always hoping to see her husband return in glory. As he did not come, but, on the contrary, bad news followed bad news, till at last came the worst news of all—the account of his death—Porcia resolved to die too. Her friends, discovering her resolution, watched her very closely, and took away from her a dagger she wore. But she baffled them by gathering red-hot coals from the hearth and swallowing them; and so she died in great torments.

Another lady—who was beautiful and bad—now began to fill a great place in Roman history. This was Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, who had been such great friends with Cæsar that she followed him to Rome, and lived in his house there till he died. While the wars went on between his murderers and the Three Men, she lived quietly in Egypt; but the

moment the murderers were beaten, she started off to make friends with Antony. I am afraid she would have started to meet Brutus or Cassius just as eagerly if they had been the winners.

She sailed to meet Antony in a gorgeous boat, glittering with gold and silver and bright colors. The sails were purple, the oars silver. On a rich couch in the stern, under a spangled canopy, lay Cleopatra herself, now past the prime of her beauty, but still very handsome, jeweled, and perfumed, and painted, and dressed in her most ravishing style. Round her stood beautiful girls and boys who fanned her, while a band of music played soft, languishing airs.

Such a fairy-like sight people had never seen before. They left their work to run down to the river banks to watch the boat sail slowly past. As for Antony, he stood staring, with great stupid eyes and wide-open mouth, in mute wonder, till the fairy boat anchored, and the Queen asked him to supper. It was an expensive meal for him. Before the eggs were eaten he was over head and ears in love; and his cunning charmer had entangled him so hopelessly in her net that he went away with her to Egypt and forgot Rome, and his wife, and his power, and every thing else, in her company.

His bad wife, Fulvia, almost died of jealousy when she heard of it. To rouse Antony, she got up a rebellion in Italy, and contrived so well that the war began again. She succeeded in startling her husband; but Augustus defeated her officers, and when Antony met her, he treated her so brutally that she went home, sickened, and died.

Augustus, who was not quite ready for war yet, pretended to be just as great friends with Antony as ever, and flattered him, and wheedled him into marrying his sister—a beautiful and virtuous lady, named OCTAVIA—though he knew very well that Antony did not love her, and was not likely to do so.

To make every body perfectly happy, and put an end forever to any cause for quarrels, the Three Men agreed to take in a fourth partner, SEXTUS POMPEIUS, a son of Pompey, who had given them a great deal of trouble of late. So now every body was satisfied, and there never were in all the world four such loving friends as Augustus, Antony, Lepidus, and Sextus Pompey. Oh! the fine time that was coming, every body said, for the good people of Rome!

Little, limping, stammering Augustus had his own ideas on that subject, which no one knew but himself. After a time he picked a quarrel with Sextus Pompey, and drove him out of the islands which had been allotted to him in the partnership, and sent him, flying for his life, into the East. There some of Antony's soldiers caught him, and very quietly put him to death. As Lepidus had made a show of taking his part, Augustus crossed over into Africa, where Lepidus was, and won away his whole army from him. He thought at first of killing him; but on reflection, seeing that he was too stupid to be mischievous, sent him to Rome to be high-priest—or pope, as the high-priest of Rome was afterward called. And I dare say he made as good a pope as a politician.

So now there was no one left to share with but Antony. He was away in Egypt, more in love than ever with Cleopatra. The happy couple thought of nothing but carousing, and merry-making, and eating and drinking—as though life was to last forever, and there was no Augustus to blink at them out of his wicked little eyes. Antony, they say, when he was tired of idleness, used to go out a fishing; and Cleopatra always took care to hire expert divers to plunge secretly into the water and hook little fish to his line. But one day, one of these divers blunderingly fastened a salt fish on the hook instead of a fresh one, and when Antony hauled it up, there was a great laugh.

Antony was a monstrous glutton, and used to boast of it as a great merit to Cleopatra. She offered to wager that she would eat the worth of more money than he at a meal. Antony, looking at her little figure, then at his own huge paunch, accepted the bet. She took a pearl of immense price, dissolved it in vinegar, and drank it. Then there was more laughing, and Antony swore, in his coarse way, that there never was any woman in the world so clever as Cleopatra.

In the midst of their laughing, and swearing, and carousing, the merry pair were aroused by the news that Augustus had declared war against Cleopatra. This was no laughing matter indeed. To revenge himself, Antony divorced his virtuous wife Octavia, whom he had basely deserted, married Cleopatra, and gathered a great fleet and an army to fight Augustus.

They met on the old battle-ground, Greece. Before the battle, Antony and Cleopatra took secret counsel together and resolved to run away, deserting their soldiers. They took ship accordingly; but the wind failed them, and they were overtaken by Augustus, whose vessels were light, and depended chiefly on their oars. Then the battle began, near a point of land called Actium.

Antony's sailors fought well; and as his ships were larger and more numerous than those of Augustus, the chance was in his favor. But in the midst of the battle, Cleopatra—whether from treachery or cowardice, I know not—hoisted the signal to make sail, and went off with sixty vessels. Antony no sooner saw her go, than he leaped into a boat and pulled after her, deserting his brave sailors as he had deserted his soldiers.

The wretched couple fled to Egypt, hotly pursued by Augustus. They were miserable enough now—each distrusting the other, and trembling, and lying, and hoping, and fearing, in a pitiable way. Cleopatra sent to Augustus to say how glad she was he was come. He sent a messenger to her with civil words, but Antony caught him, and in his rage had him scourged. Trembling afterward through fear of Augustus's vengeance, he wrote a pitiful letter to him to beg his pardon, saying that misfortune had soured his temper, and would Augustus be good enough to scourge one of Antony's men, and so square the account?

Cleopatra wrote letter after letter to Augustus to try to make terms with him; but he, in his cautious,

cunning way, would make no promises. Wearied out at last, she deserted Antony, and shut herself up in a great tower built like an Eastern tomb, without door or entrance. There she began, for the first time, to think of death. In order to find out what death was like, she poisoned several of her maids, one after another, with different poisons, and stood by them while they writhed in the last agonies, asking, "Is it hard to bear?"

To Antony she sent word—or some one bore word for her—that she had killed herself. He had cursed her and reviled her when she left him; now all his love returned, and in the fury of his grief he stabbed himself mortally.

As he lay gasping, messengers came in haste to say that Cleopatra was alive and well. They carried Antony to the wall of the great tower, and a basket was lowered to hoist him up. When Cleopatra saw him dying, she threw her arms round him, and shrieked, and cried, and vowed that she would not outlive her darling Antony one single minute, and held him in her embrace till he expired.

Then she dressed herself, and perfumed her hair, and painted her cheeks. On the walls of her room she hung up portraits of her old lover, Cæsar, and strewed on the tables, and on every side, memorials of him—presents he had made her, letters he had written. When all was ready, and she had made herself as beautiful as she could, Augustus was admitted to see her.

She hoped, old as she was—she was nearly forty—to charm him as she had charmed his uncle and

his brother-in-law. She flattered him, and played off all her winning arts upon him—bursting into graceful affliction at the mention of Cæsar's name, and saying that all she wanted now was to lay her dead body beside Cæsar's.

But all this high art was lost upon cold, calculating Augustus. In a frozen tone he bade her cheer up; and when she threw herself upon the ground in an elegant despair, he walked out of the room.

He never saw her again. A day or two afterward he received a letter from her, saying that all was over. He sent an officer in haste to see what had happened: the man found her lying dead, with a servant of hers dying beside her, and struggling, in her last moments, to replace the crown which had fallen from her mistress's head.

Some people suppose that she died of a bite of an asp, which she placed on her arm. But it is more likely that she wounded herself with a poisoned dagger. In reality, it matters very little how so worthless a creature came to her last end

B O O K I V.

T H E E M P E R O R S.

CHAPTER XLIX.

AUGUSTUS.

THERE was no one now able to stand against Augustus. One by one he had overthrown all his rivals, and when he returned home in glory, with a great quantity of treasure and a swarm of soldiers at his heels, he let people know that he intended to be master of Rome.

All these wars, and murderings, and burnings, and robbings, had disgusted the people so thoroughly with politics, that they were glad of any change which promised peace and quietness ; besides which, they could not have helped themselves if they had wished. So they let Augustus make himself Consul as often as he liked ; Tribune for life, and Censor, and Prætor ; and to crown all, when stupid Lepidus, who was knocked about a good deal in his old age, died and was buried, Augustus became high-priest too.

So now he had power enough to satisfy any man. As Consul, he could propose any law he wanted to the Senate ; and as he was Censor, and could make

or unmake any Senator, he could insure its being passed. As Tribune, he could veto any law proposed by any one else, and there was no getting over his veto. As Prætor, he sat in judgment upon any lawsuit, civil or criminal, which he thought worth judging; and decided it as he pleased, without appeal. As Consul, again, he alone saw that the laws were executed, and could enforce this one, or pass over that one, as he chose. As Consul, too, he commanded the armies throughout the empire, and could, at need, call out near half a million of men to enforce his will.

To make this enormous power of his sure, he chose out of his old army a band of trusty men, and established them as a body-guard in a barrack just outside the walls of Rome. They were called PRÆTORIAN GUARDS. They were the first soldiers ever paid by Rome to serve, not against her enemies, but against her citizens; and if there had been no other mischief at work, they alone would have sufficed to ruin Rome.

The history of the Prætorian Guards, which I have to tell you in the following chapters, will show you how difficult it is for either liberty or safe government to exist in the presence of a standing army.

With all these titles and all this power, one might suppose that Augustus would have been content. But the Senate still thought that something more might be done for him, and proposed that he should make himself Dictator for life. He, remembering his uncle's fate, said he would rather not.

Then the Senate asked him, would he like to take

the name of Romulus, which was a very fine and well-sounding name ?

He said he would prefer that of Augustus, which meant respectable ; and at this I am not surprised, as he stood somewhat in want of a certificate of character. He also called himself EMPEROR, a title which was commonly given to all Roman generals ; and this became, in after times, the distinguishing title of the tyrants who succeeded him.

In this way, some twenty-three years before Christ, the Republic of Rome came to an end. It had been a sorry affair for a long time—a sort of sham republic, in which all the power and the wealth and the land of the state were held by a few families ; and I think it likely that very few Romans regretted it.

Augustus and his successors, for many generations, kept up the farce of speaking of the Republic, and were mightily shocked at the name of king. Some of them pretended to let the people choose Consuls, and other magistrates. But they always took care that the people chose the men they wanted ; and indeed, the spirit of freedom had sunk so low that the Romans were generally quite willing to give up their rights.

The Empire of Rome at this time included all the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, in Europe, Asia, and Africa. All Italy, Spain, Greece, Syria, Egypt, and North Africa, were Roman ; and so were parts of the countries which we call France, Germany, Switzerland, and Turkey. We can not tell how many persons this vast empire contained. Probably over a hundred millions of souls. Yet when Augustus

had the citizens counted, it was found that they numbered only four million one hundred and thirty-seven thousand, who were scattered over Italy, Greece, Spain, Gaul, Asia Minor, and elsewhere. The others were subjects of Rome, not citizens, and slaves.

The city of Rome, and the people who lived there, had greatly changed within the past two hundred years.

Rome now contained perhaps twice as many inhabitants as New York does at the present time. Not only was all the space within the old wall filled up, but the houses had outgrown it, and spread on both sides the river for some distance. The city had greatly improved in appearance too. Many of the houses were built of white stone, and adorned with marble pillars brought at great cost from Greece and other foreign parts. Some of them covered a large extent of ground: these were the houses of rich people. Most of them were handsome buildings, with pillared porches, over which a sign in large letters bade the visitor Welcome; with mosaic floors, and walls covered with slabs of marble, or frescoes, or rich tapestries; and containing far more rooms than private houses do in our day. Indeed, I doubt whether any houses of our time are as splendid as the finest Roman mansions, though probably ours are more comfortable. The house of Clodius the Tribune cost over half a million of dollars.

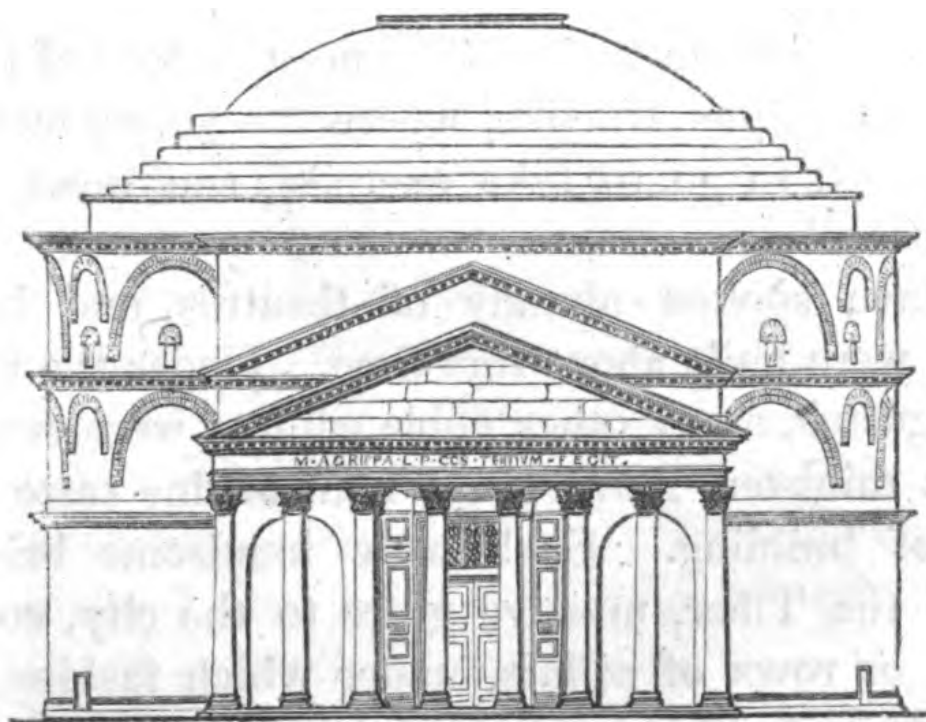
Most of the people of Rome lived in lodgings. Twenty-four out of every twenty-five houses in Rome were let out in apartments; for the best suites of rooms such high rents were charged that men of

moderate means often lived on the third and fourth story. These lodging-houses were very lofty. Augustus made a law forbidding the construction of houses higher than seventy feet from the ground. The lowest story fronting on the street was generally let out for shops.

The streets were still narrow and crooked; they were not widened till after the great fire which I shall have to mention under the reign of Nero. They were, however, paved, and very well drained.

There were a number of market-places in various parts of the city—such as the fish market, the cattle market, the cooks' market, the vegetable market, etc. Round these markets stood the best shops of Rome; and there were usually on the square a temple or two, and a large building which served as an Exchange.

Outside the walls were open places which we should call parks, for the assemblies of the people,



PANTHEON OF AGRIPPA.



ARCH OF DEUSUS.

reviews, and promenade. The most famous of these was the Campus Martius, where the young men of Rome used to go to take exercise, run races, and play at ball.

I have spoken already of theatres and baths which were built about this time. Under the reign of Augustus, many other noble edifices were erected by his minister, AGRIPPA, a man of fine taste and fond of building. Such were handsome bridges across the Tiber, massive gates to the city, colonnades, or rows of pillars, under which fashionable men walked during the heat of the day, temples,

palaces, and the like. Most of these have long since crumbled into dust. But the PANTHEON stands to this day as strong, as glorious a work of art as ever; priests in cassock and surplice chant mass in the recesses where Agrippa set statues of Jupiter and Apollo, and pious Romans kneel on the slabs of granite and porphyry which were trodden, nineteen hundred years ago, by Augustus and his counselors. Another great edifice, which was built by Augustus to be the tomb of the Roman emperors, is also standing; but it has long been used as a circus. The Romans take their children there to see clowns and fire-works. I wonder what Augustus would have thought if he could have foreseen that the gayest place in Rome would be his grave.



THE GREAT DRAIN AND VICINITY.

So many works of this kind were built during his reign, that he used to boast that he had found Rome of brick and left it of marble.

It was not usual to drive through the streets of Rome. Women and sick persons were allowed to be carried in litters ; and rich men traveled in the same conveyance, on the shoulders of tall, red-robed slaves, though it was not considered right. Building materials and other heavy articles were carried through the streets in carts ; but farmers brought their produce to market in paniers on the back of mules, and cried their wares as they rode along. One of the chief reasons for the rarity of wheeled vehicles at Rome was the narrowness of the streets. Wine-dealers, barbers, bakers, ointment-sellers, and others, had booths before their stores, which often stretched so far into the street as to leave but a narrow passage free ; and many processions at Rome—funeral processions and triumphs, for instance—filled the street from side to side.

The Roman people at this time was composed of three classes of persons : men of enormous wealth ; men who had little or nothing ; and slaves.

The slaves were probably more numerous than the two other classes together ; and I have no doubt that at this time they comprised among them as much learning and intelligence as the citizens. They were of all races and nations ; classed by the Romans as cattle. Many were trained as doctors ; and as there was a great prejudice against the Greek doctors at Rome, the art of physic was mostly left to them. Others were men of letters, who wrote

and read for their masters; these were often men of fine taste, and some of them wrote works which still live. Others again were mechanics, builders, masons, practical engineers; tailors, cooks, bakers; and a great number were farmers, very skillful men at their trade. Young slaves who had learned no trade were very cheap and plentiful; and thrifty men like Crassus made fortunes by buying them up, educating them well, and selling them at high prices. No man at Rome was considered to belong to the best society unless he owned several hundred slaves; and very rich men counted them by the thousand.

I have told you already that the effect of the great wars which the Romans were always waging was to make the rich richer, and the poor poorer. The common soldiers were usually made beggars for life, while the generals and chief officers made immense fortunes. In the time of Augustus, it is said that the whole soil of Italy was owned by two thousand persons, many of whom occupied immense estates, which they farmed with slaves. There were hardly any small farmers left. The consequence of this was, that while these great landholders had splendid country seats, with parks and gardens and grounds of wonderful beauty, vast tracts of land which ought to have been tilled were thrown into pasturage. Generally speaking, these rich men deemed money-making a degrading pursuit, and spent their lives in search of pleasure. But some of them, like Crassus, were never satisfied with what they had, and made a business of lending

money on interest, speculating in real estate, training slaves, and so on.

Of the poor men at Rome, the better part wrought at some trade or other for very low wages. A man could live at Rome on what would not support a respectable dog here; and hence mechanics, artisans, and laborers received the merest trifle for their labor. Latterly there had grown up in Italy several manufactures, which employed a good deal of labor, though fortunes were rarely made in this way, as the market for such home products was small. For the ruder products of industry rich Romans relied on their slaves; and more expensive wares—fine dresses, works of art, and other objects of luxury—were commonly imported from abroad.

Though Rome never was what we should call to-day a commercial city, there was at this time far more trade there than there had been in the days of the old republic. The Mediterranean was dotted with small craft plying between Rome and Greece, Asia Minor, Egypt, Africa, and Spain. Most of the owners of these vessels sailed on board of them, and trafficked from place to place. Some of them made large fortunes by judicious voyages; but among the best society at Rome there prevailed an idea that trade was debasing, and you will not find merchants taking a leading part in public affairs, or enjoying a large measure of esteem. The people of Carthage, of Marseilles, of Cyrene, were wiser than the Romans in this respect.

One of the best classes at Rome was the bar. The lawyers were highly and deservedly esteemed,

and the only class which could vie with the soldiers in influence. They took no fees from their clients. It was not unusual for rich clients to make them presents; but this was not the rule: lawyers were always understood to plead from principle or friendship. Leading orators easily obtained governorships or other offices under the state, which enabled them to grow rich, not very honestly in some cases; but many eminent members of the bar were always poor.

Thus, you will perceive, as trade was looked down upon, the law unprofitable, and many of the callings which provide a living for men of education to-day exclusively filled by slaves, a Roman might be a man of talent and learning, and yet find it no easy matter to gain his bread. The consequence of this state of things was a large increase in the number of "clients," of whom I spoke in the beginning of this book. Young men of good standing thought it no shame to become clients or hangers-on to rich men and politicians. They were expected to be in the antechamber of their patron in the morning before he got up; to praise and flatter him; to follow him in the streets if he wished it; to applaud him when he spoke in public; to canvass for him at elections, and so on. In return for this they received every evening at his house either a basket of food or a small sum of money. This strange system of begging was so common in the time of Augustus that poor men of education followed it naturally; and many, with more energy than pride, became the clients of several patrons, ran from house to house

fawning on each, and called at several doors of an evening to receive their baskets.

Romans of this class, and indeed all the higher classes of Romans, led idle lives. Their chief occupations were the game of ball, or other athletic exercises, the bath, and the supper. Every gentleman at Rome exercised once a day at the Campus Martius, bathed, and supped in company. The supper was often a drunken, disgraceful orgy, which lasted far into the night; but to men of refined minds it afforded the only opportunity they had for the interchange of ideas on letters, politics, and philosophy.

There were no free schools at Rome. At the common schools arithmetic, reading, writing, history, and sometimes law and Greek were taught; but rich men usually had their sons educated by slaves at home, and sent them to Athens to finish. All well educated men spoke Greek as well as Latin, and affected to prefer it to their own language.

It was the fashion at Rome to copy the Greeks in every thing; and as they were a polished, lettered people, the Romans began to cultivate art and letters. The most famous poets and authors of Rome lived during the reign of Augustus. In those days, and indeed for a long time afterward, authors cut a sorry figure in the world, being often hangers-on of some soldier or statesman, who gave them clothes and victuals on condition that they should make him out a great man in their works. Thus you will find that the Roman poets of this age thought very highly of Augustus, and of his friend and min-

ister, MÆCENAS. I hope their praise was sincere, and that when HORACE and the other men of letters of the day gathered round Mæcenas in his house at Tibur—it is an iron foundry now, and a mill stream pours foaming out of the ragged windows—there was no mean motive or sordid hope in any one of their breasts.



HORACE.

These poets have done more for the glory of Augustus than even his victories. Some of their works will live forever; and when you have read all the great writers of this country and of England, I hope you will read some of them.

Though, as you know, there was no printing at this time, still, labor was so cheap, and there were so many slaves able to write, that a copy of these great works was not costly. They were to be had for a very small sum at any of the booksellers, done up in rolls, with the author's name in red letters on a ticket attached to the stick. A famous Roman author, named PLINY, who lived nearly a hundred years after Augustus, was once sent to London. He was loth to go, as, he said, it was so wild a place, and he would certainly find no one to talk to there; but almost the first thing he saw in the streets of London was a copy of his own works hung up for sale, for a sum equal to a few shillings of our money.

I am sorry to say that the Roman people had grown less virtuous and less manly as they grew more lettered and refined. Following the example of the nobility, they indulged in vices that would have struck horror to their forefathers' hearts. They had lost that stern sense of Roman virtue which had made Rome great; they were neither lovers of liberty nor haters of wickedness. They had come to despise their absurd old gods; but when they cast them off they had nothing to put in their place, and they worshipped sensual pleasure only. A noble Roman knew no higher aim in life than to eat learnedly and gluttonously, to dress splendidly, and to hire a crowd of worthless persons of both sexes to fawn upon him.

To return to Augustus. With the help of his ministers, Agrippa and Mæcenæ, he made many wise laws, and improved the administration of government. Ever since the Marian wars, Rome had been a haunt for robbers and murderers. Men dared not walk the streets (which were not lighted) at night: it was not uncommon to find in the morning dead bodies floating on the Tiber, or lying stripped in the narrow alleys of the city. Agrippa divided the city into wards, and established a police, which made Rome a tolerably safe residence.

He helped Augustus to clear the Senate of a number of worthless persons who had contrived to obtain seats there, and put good men, chosen from the people, in their places. He regulated the provinces too, and put a stop, in part, to the system of wholesale robbery which most of the governors carried on;

placed the money affairs of the state on a sound footing; forbade gladiator-fights of over sixty on a side; and made many other useful reforms. All these acts were done in the name of Augustus, and he has had the credit of them.

His other friend, Mæcenas, was also a great help to him. He was not so virtuous or so vigorous a man as Agrippa; but he was wise and kind-hearted, and the people respected him. When Augustus flew into a rage, and was for cutting heads off, Mæcenas often soothed him with a jest or a laugh; and I have no doubt he saved a good many lives, as well as his master's character, in this way. Once, they say, Augustus was sitting in court condemning people to death at a furious rate, when Mæcenas, who could not push his way through the throng, wrote on his wax tablets, "Get up, hangman!" and sent them to Augustus. It was a blunt reproof, but it answered the purpose. Augustus got up and left the court-room.

When these wise counselors perceived that the people were growing weary and beginning to grumble, they would get up grand shows to amuse them. Such were the old wild-beast hunts, and man-fights; and once, by way of a great treat, Augustus had thirty crocodiles chased and killed in a pond made for the purpose. After these shows there was usually a distribution of coin to the poor; and in this way Augustus came to be considered a very superior ruler.

Soon after he became emperor the Temple of Janus was closed, for the first time since the end of

the first war with Carthage; and people began to hope they would have peace. But wars soon broke out in various parts of the empire, and the fighting went on just as usual. One Roman army, led by a general named VARUS, was surrounded by the Germans, and cut off almost to a man, Varus killing himself in his despair. Augustus was so grieved when he heard of it that he tore his clothes, and cried again and again, "Varus, give me back my legions!" startling his servants as he slept, by groaning, in the same piteous tones, "Varus, where are my legions?" But in the end the Germans were beaten, and Varus and his legions were forgotten.

As he grew old, Augustus led an unhappy life. His first wife, the daughter of the Tribune Clodius, and the wicked Fulvia, he had put away without cause, in order to marry SCRIBONIA, an aunt of Sextus Pompey. He only married her to gain her nephew's good-will; and when he had got rid of him, as I explained in the last chapter, he divorced her, choosing, of all days in the year, the one on which she bore him a daughter to put her away.

Happily, such crimes seldom escape punishment. Augustus married LIVIA, a bad, beautiful woman, whom he took from her husband, and who had two sons already. She ruled Augustus completely, but bore him no children, and became very hateful to the Romans.

Augustus first intended that his sister's son, MARCELLUS, should succeed him, and accordingly made him marry his only daughter, JULIA. Marcellus dying young, Augustus then married Julia to his

good counselor and friend Agrippa, and resolved to leave the throne to him. When he died, it was understood that one of his two sons, the Emperor's grandchildren, would succeed.

But Livia had made up her mind that the next emperor must be her own son, **TIBERIUS CLAUDIUS**. To gain her end, she made him marry Augustus's daughter, Julia, now for the third time a widow, and a woman of a shocking character. Still, Agrippa's sons were in the way. Not long though.

Suddenly one of the young men died at Marseilles, no one knew how. Then, a short while afterward, his brother got a scratch somehow, which seemed nothing, but which inflamed and festered till he died too. I am afraid there is no doubt but Livia was the murderess in both cases, and had a hand in the sudden death of Marcellus as well.

These sudden deaths must have embittered Augustus's old age. More troubles followed. His stepson and son-in-law, Tiberius, wearied out with his wife's wickedness, left Rome to be rid of her. Her father was furious with him at first; but when he came to learn how Julia behaved, he lost patience with her as well, and exiled her to an island at a distance from Rome, and kept her there in prison, on low diet, with her mother, Scribonia. She was his only child, and his harshness shows how her bad conduct had cut him to the heart.

So Livia carried her point, and her son Tiberius was appointed by Augustus to succeed him. We shall see presently how it profited her.

In the seventy-fifth year of his age Augustus ac-

accompanied his son-in-law on a journey as far as Naples. On his return home, he fell ill at Nola, and being bowed by old age and care, died in a few days. On his death-bed they say that he turned to his courtiers and asked them whether he had not acted his part well in life?

They, of course, said he had.

"Then," said he, borrowing the words which the Roman actors used at the end of their plays, "applaud me!"

I do not think you will applaud him. In his later years he committed fewer crimes than in his youth, and he therefore deserves the less blame. But before applauding him, we must be certain that he, and not Agrippa and Mæcenas, was the real author of the good works of his reign. And we must blot out of our memory the whole of the first forty years of his life—a rather difficult thing to do.

Fourteen years before his death OUR SAVIOUR was born at Bethlehem, in Judea.

CHAPTER L.

TIBERIUS.

WHEN Augustus fell ill, Livia sent in great haste to Tiberius to bid him return to Rome. He came back fast enough, and the moment Augustus was dead, got soldiers ready to seize the chief power in case any one opposed him.

Having done this, and his artful mother having secured most of the Senators, Tiberius went into the Senate and made a very affecting speech over the death of Augustus. He cried a good deal in the making of it, and said he did not know what was to become of Rome, for, for his part, he was quite incapable of governing the empire. He was not so clever as Augustus, he said, and oh, what should he do ?

But when some clumsy Senator proposed that Tiberius should take part of the government if the whole was too much for him, Tiberius scowled upon him so fiercely, that he jumped up directly, and said he only meant it as a joke. The other Senators were not so stupid. They said, one and all, that nobody but Tiberius was fit to be emperor, and that he would rule Rome admirably. He then said he supposed he must submit; his only consolation was that he was very old—he was about fifty-five—and that death must soon rid him of his cares.

So he began his reign. The funeral of Augustus occupied people's minds for some time: it was a grand affair; and to wind up, a Senator, who got well paid for the deed, came forward and swore he saw the late Emperor ascending into heaven—so that he was ranked among the gods, and had temples raised in his honor. I hope it did him good.

That bad woman, Livia, had at last won the prize she had so long sought; and though she was nearly eighty years of age, she now promised herself a hearty enjoyment of power. The Senators, knowing her mind, paid as much honor to her as to her son. But Tiberius put a sudden stop to this, saying that it was beneath them to flatter a mere woman; upon which they discovered suddenly that Livia was not worth notice. Tiberius would not let her even know what he intended to do; so she lived in her own house, a lonely old hag, despised and hated, till she died. Even then Tiberius did not relent; he said he was too busy to go to her funeral, and sneered at a Senator who praised her. So she was punished.

Tiberius began his government very well indeed. He made several new laws which were well conceived, and did his best to have the old ones faithfully carried out. He took away from the people the right of choosing the magistrates, and gave it to the Senate; always providing that they must choose the persons he preferred. He was a very hard worker, and a man of great capacity of mind; and at first he gave himself wholly up to public affairs. In this way he ruled Rome well for many years.

Unhappily, he was a man of a dark, secret, distrustful character, who never had any friends, and never could, by any possibility, say what he meant, or act in a straightforward manner. These bad qualities kept away from him such men as his stepfather had had around him, and he got in their place one of the worst scoundrels in history. This fellow's name was *ÆLIUS SEJANUS*.

How he contrived to make himself the favorite of Tiberius I do not know ; perhaps, as they were both bad at heart, they felt an inward sympathy for each other. At all events, Tiberius no sooner became Emperor than he made Sejanus commander of the guards, and allowed him to collect them in a large barrack in Rome, so as to awe the people. Sejanus pretended to be so devoted to Tiberius after this, that they appeared to be bosom friends, and had no secrets for each other. When Tiberius went to live in the country—as he did, after a few years' reign—Sejanus was his deputy at Rome.

Then this crafty man began to lay plans to make himself Emperor. Tiberius had a son, *DRUSUS* : Sejanus contrived to win over his wife, and the wicked pair poisoned Drusus. So he was out of the way.

Tiberius had a nephew also, *GERMANICUS*, a very fine young man, who had gained great glory by his valor in fighting the Germans, and was a prodigious favorite with the people. He was so noble a youth, and so much beloved, that the Emperor was jealous of him, and was quite ready to help Sejanus in any plot against him. The way they managed was this.

They recalled Germanicus from Germany and sent him into Syria, where a bold, violent man, named Piso, was Roman governor. To Piso, Tiberius wrote a letter, which was never seen by any one but the Emperor and Piso himself. Whatever it contained, Piso and Germanicus quarreled as soon as the latter arrived; and the quarrel went on very bitterly till Germanicus was taken ill, and died. Piso was afterward arrested and killed himself—but that mattered very little. Germanicus was out of the way.

But he had a wife, a bold, lion-hearted woman,



AGRIPPINA'S CARRIAGE.

named AGRIPPINA, and three sons. Sejanus set to work to get rid of them. He went to Tiberius, and told him Agrippina was plotting against him; and then to Agrippina, and said that Tiberius intended to do her a mischief.

She, boldly and rashly, spoke her mind about Tiberius; and he, roused to watchfulness by the hint he had received, let Sejanus seize her and shut her up in prison. With her he shut up two of her sons, and without any noise or trial, starved them to death. The poor mother, no doubt broken-hearted by these cruelties, refused to eat, and died too, soon after.

At the same time, as there were many leading citizens who saw through the villain Sejanus, he contrived to get rid of them. Laws had been lately

passed to prevent conspiracies and rebellions, which provided that any one who chose to inform against a traitor should have his property as a reward. Sejanus had a pack of informers about him; these fellows were only too happy to come forward to accuse wealthy men, and the miserable Senate was only too eager to condemn them. In this way, Sejanus brought his enemies to trial one by one, and had them put out of the way.

So now, he thought, he was very near the goal of his ambition. There was only one boy still to be disposed of—Germanicus's youngest son, CAIUS. Sejanus chuckled as he thought how easily he could manage him.

But while he was gloating over his fine prospects, a letter came to the Senate from Tiberius, who was always in the country. The fawning Senators hung round the chair on which Sejanus sat, smirking and bowing, while the letter was read. It was very long, and the first part was obscure; but toward the end, it began to censure Sejanus. One by one the Senators drew a little farther off, and stopped their smirking. At the end, the letter flatly charged Sejanus with treason, and called upon the Senate to try him. At this the whole Senate burst into a shout, and fairly howled at the doomed man.

He, stupefied by the shock, got up and asked if that was his name they were shouting?

They soon let him know. They had him arrested on the spot, and tried that afternoon. They didn't want any witnesses. Every body hated him enough to condemn him, and besides, Tiberius had

accused him—that sufficed. So they condemned him without delay.

As he was dragged away the people crowded round him, hooting him. One of them tore away the lappel of his robe, so that he should not be able to hide his face. He was put to death directly, and his body dragged through the streets by a hook, then thrown into the Tiber, the crowd throwing garbage and spitting on it on the way.

His two children—quite little children—were also condemned to death. One of them, a little girl, burst into tears at the sight of the rude soldiers, and cried and screamed that she would never do it again, beseeching them to whip her if she had been naughty, but not, oh! not to take her to prison. She and her brother were both executed—the brutal soldiers, it is said, having shamefully ill-treated her before her death. To end the horrible story of this wretched favorite, his wife, whom he had put away some time before, killed herself on hearing of her children's murder.

You may form some idea of the character of Tiberius from a letter which he wrote to the Senate only a day or two before he accused Sejanus, in which he called him “My Sejanus, the cherished partner of all my thoughts and cares.” This was his way of acting on all occasions.

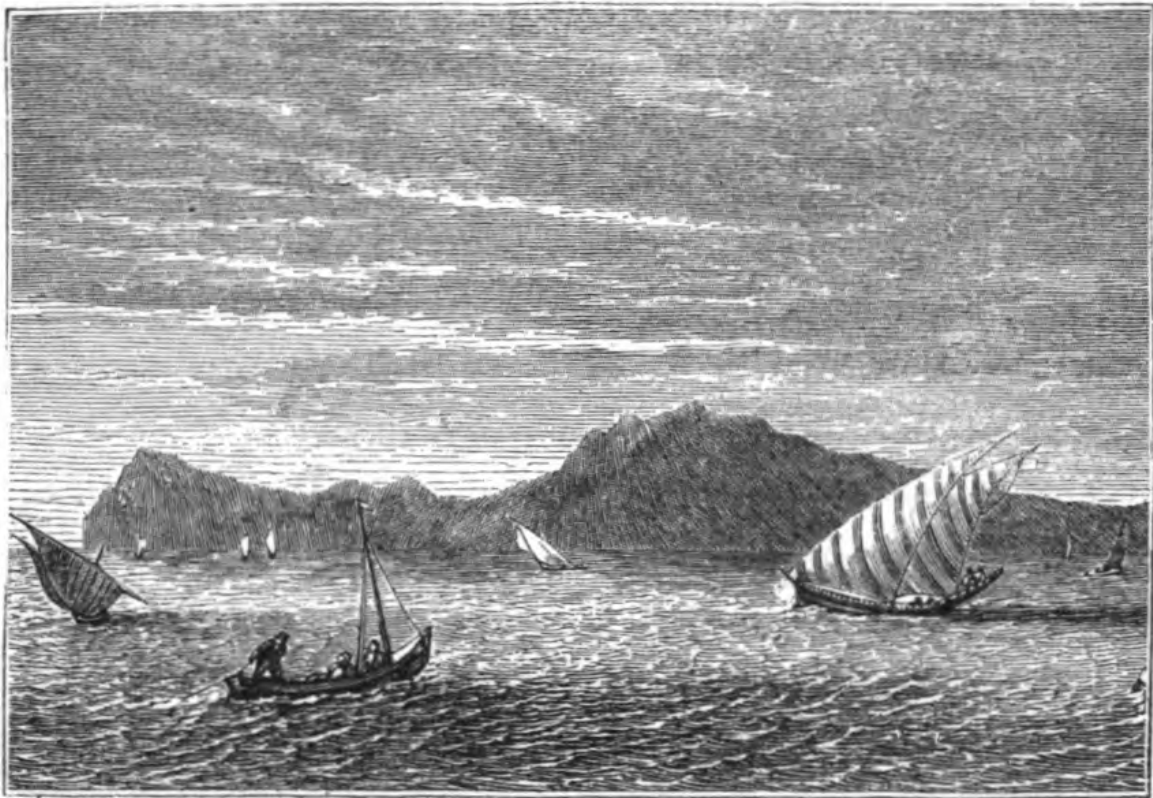
Once he sent for a Senator named GALLUS to come and see him at his country seat. When Gallus came, the Emperor called him his dearest friend, having meanwhile written to the Senate to accuse him. In due time, of course, the Senate condemned

him, and the soldiers went to the country seat to seize him. Tiberius pretended to be very much shocked. He would hardly let Gallus go at first; but, on second thoughts, he said it was best to obey the Senate, but they must take the greatest care of his good friend, and not hurt him on any account. They took him off, and knowing their business, slowly starved him to death in prison.

He behaved in the same way to the informers. At first he encouraged them, and called them true patriots, and rewarded them largely; then all at once, discovering that they were shocking characters, had them all put to death.

I am happy to say that he was punished in this life for these infamies. He had been in his youth a handsome, well made man; he was now bent and bald, and his body was covered with boils and sores, which gave him such dreadful pain at times that he would roar again. He lived wholly in the country, not daring to sleep for fear of being murdered, and trembling at the sight of a strange face.

He was disgusting in his habits, cowardly, cruel, and superstitious to the last. He had once been foretold the future by a Chaldean wizard: he had a whole troop of them now with him, and spent his nights on the top of his house, shivering and mumbling strange words which he did not understand, while these wizards pretended to tell him the future from the stars. If he did not like the prophecies, he had the prophet thrown down a high rock; if they did not come true, he did the same. So the wizards led a pretty hard life.



CAPREÆ.

At last this disgusting old man fell ill, and his breath left his body. His nephew and heir, Caius, and the other courtiers, were in high glee, and all was merriment around the death-bed, when Tiberius opened his eyes and came to his senses again.

Every body was terribly frightened at this sad turn. But MACRO—a ruffian who had been the Emperor's best friend—said he would soon settle matters; so he piled pillows and clothes on the dying man's face till he was smothered, at the island of Capreæ, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, and the twenty-third of his reign.

It had been a miserable reign for Rome. Besides the persons he caused to be put to death, vast numbers of rich men were falsely accused by the informers, and murdered by the Senate. The public morals grew worse and worse; and as if this were not

enough misery, two great fires laid the city waste, and a large theatre fell down during a gladiator-fight, and killed fifty thousand persons.

It was during his reign that CHRIST was crucified at Jerusalem. We have still several letters which are said to have been written by PONTIUS PILATE to Tiberius on the subject. In one of them he says he thinks that Christ should be made one of the gods of Rome. The Senators would not allow it, because they said they were the proper persons to decide who should be gods and who men. They even went so far as to make a law against the Christians. But Tiberius—you may be surprised to learn—would not hear of any such thing. He let the Senate persecute the Jews without stint; but he declared that whoever molested the Christians he would put to death.

CHAPTER LI.

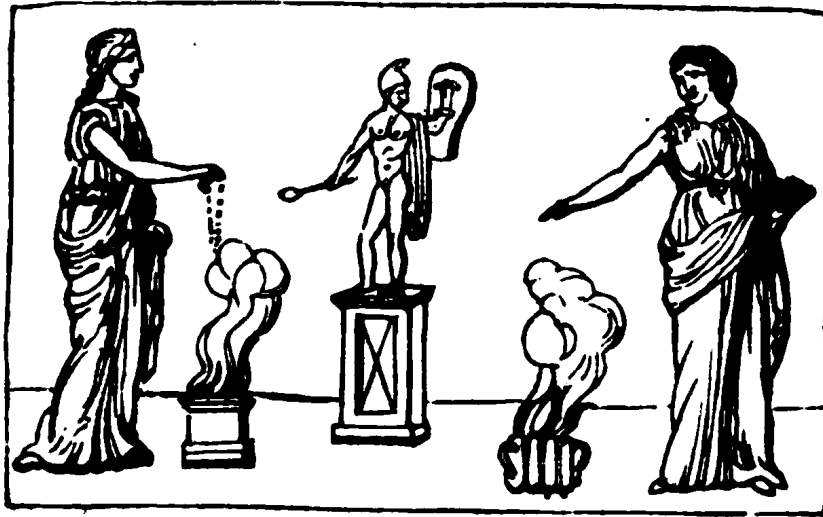
CALIGULA.

THE moment Macro had smothered Tiberius, and it was sure he was quite dead, young CAIUS CÆSAR—who was nicknamed CALIGULA, or LITTLE BOOTS, from his having worn soldiers' hob-nailed boots when a boy—made haste to Rome to bully the Senate. Tiberius had made a will, in which he left the empire to Caligula and his grandson TIBERIUS, jointly. Caligula said he would have it all to himself; and as he had Macro and the guards on his side, the Senators said, Oh! yes, he should have the whole.

He was very popular indeed at first. The people crowded round him when he appeared in the streets, and called him all the endearing names they could think of—their bright star, their darling of their hearts, their pet nursling, and so on. When he fell ill, crowds lay all night outside his door to



CALIGULA.



ROMAN LADIES OFFERING THANKS.

be near him, and all Rome worried itself about his recovery.

The Romans said they liked him on account of his good father, Germanicus, whom he resembled in appearance. Most of them must have known, however, that this pet nursling of theirs had seen his two brothers and his mother starved to death without a word of complaint, or the least effort to save them. This ought to have taught them better.

However, they soon found out their mistake. When Caligula got well, he began to show what he was. The first thing he did was to have young Tiberius, who was to have been his partner in the throne, arrested and accused of having said that he hoped the Emperor would not recover from his illness. Against such a charge as this the poor boy could not defend himself; so Caligula sent him word, by a file of soldiers, to kill himself.

Tiberius, a mild, gentle youth, who had never seen a man killed, was at first puzzled how to obey this cruel order. He asked the soldiers to kill him; and when they refused, he besought them to show

him where and how to strike. They gave him a sword, and showed him where his heart was, and how to pierce it. Thanking them, he ran himself through, and died instantly.

This was the beginning. I am not very sorry to say that Macro, who had murdered Tiberius, and helped to make Caligula emperor, was the next victim. Then followed hosts of people whom this young darling happened to dislike, his own wife among the number. Men began to say that he was Sejanus over again.

They were very different characters in reality. Sejanus, like his friend Tiberius, was a cold, calculating ruffian. Caligula was simply a raging maniac. He had been subject to fits from his youth, and throughout life was more or less mad. Sometimes he could not sleep for weeks and months together, and spent his nights in pacing his room up and down, fuming and raging because it was not light. He was not wholly bereft of reason, unhappily, and his madness being of that horrible kind which finds no pleasure in any thing but bloodshed and crime, he pursued these objects with a good deal of method. Still, you must consider him as a madman; such a creature as we should keep, in our day, in an asylum, behind stout iron bars.

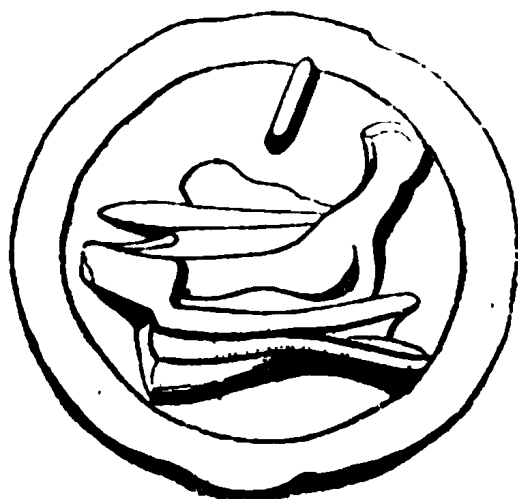
As he happened, in his day, to be Emperor of Rome, he committed, in his short reign of three years and ten months, more atrocities than can be laid to the account of any other man in history. The story of his cruelties and his vices would fill one of these volumes.

When he went to the theatre to see lion-hunts, he would sometimes order a few of the spectators to be seized at random, and thrown to the raging animals. To prevent their screaming, he would have their tongues cut out. At his suppers, he would have men tortured to death before him, and would revel over their torments. When he had a man put to death, he would give directions to the executioner to kill him slowly—not with one stab, he would say, but with many slight cuts. Even in his tender moods, he would scare some fair lady by grasping her little neck, and saying, with a wicked grimace, that if he chose he could have her head cut off, and how would she like that?

If any thing could have made men laugh while such horrid cruelties were going on, it would have been the mad freaks of this crazy monster. Tiberius had left him immense sums of money in the treasury; these, and millions more which he extorted from the people, he squandered in a thousand ridiculous ways. Once he fancied it would look well to have the circus strewn with vermilion sand, and this was done at a vast cost. Then he thought he would like a finer statue than any one else; so he had one made of gold as large as life, and had it dressed daily in the same clothes as he wore himself. Hearing of rich men spending large sums in gluttonous eating, he had a dish cooked with dissolved pearls, and other costly rubbish, worth a quarter of a million of dollars, and ate the whole at a meal. He had a bridge of boats built across a bay, with trees and houses on the boats; and when the peo-

ple collected to see him cross, he had a number of them thrown into the water, and almost split his sides laughing at their drowning struggles.

Of his horse he was very fond. He built him a house with a marble stall, and an ivory manger, and golden oats, of which I suspect the horse can not have eaten very many. When the horse went to sleep, guards were posted around the stable to prevent any noise disturbing his slumbers. He had a collar set with pearls, and the richest trappings; and in this state he would be led to dine with the Emperor. At one time Caligula thought of making this horse Consul, and I am sure he would have made as good a Consul as many of those who filled the office.



THE AS, OR ROMAN CENT.

As to himself, he said he was a god, and the Senate, as usual, echoed, "A god by all means." So they raised him a temple, and gave him a crew of priests who offered sacrifices to him, and used to ask him, in the most serious way in the world, how matters were getting on in the heathen heaven. He gave out that he had married the moon, and got a Senator to swear he had seen the moon making love to him. At times he would pretend

sea. Then he returned home, and had a grand triumph as a conqueror, and trophies were set up in honor of the victories which he did not win.

It shows you how debased the Roman people were that they bore with this frantic madman for nearly four years. The fourth year of his reign was very nearly ended when a bold Tribune, named CHÆREA, resolved to rid the world of him.

Chærea was a soldier, and a brave man. But this mad emperor had taken a dislike to him, from some reason or other, and took delight in insulting him, and calling him a coward; and when he was on guard, giving him ridiculous countersigns, to make the soldiers laugh at him.

Chærea was nursing his rage in his breast, when, to provoke him still further, Caligula made him oversee the torture of a poor woman, named QUINCTILIA, who was accused of knowing something about a plot against the Emperor. This brave woman was racked, and twisted, and pulled, and crushed, till she was nothing but a mass of bones and bruised flesh; but she was firm to the last, and confessed nothing.

You can easily fancy how it must have exasperated a man of heart like Chærea to be compelled to commit such horrid cruelties. He made his mind up directly. Calling his friends together, he told them he had resolved to do the deed at once. They urged him to wait till Caligula returned from a journey he was about making. But he said he would grudge any man the honor of killing such a monster, and if they delayed, some one would certainly kill him.

There was a public show going on at the time,

called the Palatine games. The Emperor would be sure to go : it was resolved to make an end of him at the show.

The games lasted four days. On the first day the Emperor went, and the conspirators were ready ; but Caligula was so surrounded by the guards that it was impossible to get at him. Chærea raged like a wild beast. The second day and the third passed, and the soldiers still kept so close to the Emperor that no one could approach him. Chærea was beside himself.

At last, on the fourth day, one of the conspirators proposed to the Emperor to leave the games and take a bath. He rose to do so, and as he was going out Chærea fell upon him in the passage, and felled him with a blow of his sword, saying, "Remember this, tyrant !" The other conspirators finished him, as he lay screaming, "I am not dead !"

I shall have to speak of some emperors by-and-by who were in every way blots and stains on humanity. But, judging them by their fruits, I doubt if any were worse than the madman who went by the name of "Little Boots."

CHAPTER LII.

CLAUDIUS.

GERMANICUS, the father of Caligula, had a brother, by name CLAUDIUS. This Claudius was half-witted. Some people said it was owing to a severe illness he had in his youth; others thought he was born so; any way, he was seen to be so nearly an idiot, when he grew to manhood, that in all the murderings and ups and downs I have related nobody thought of killing him, or troubled himself about his existence. His mother used to say, in speaking of any very stupid person, "He is as great a fool as my Claudius." And Tiberius and all the court being of the same opinion, they gave Claudius a horse-trainer to look after him, a house to live in, plenty to eat, and let him go loose.

He spent all his youth and most of his manhood in this way, moping a good deal in his gardens, and thinking it very hard that no one noticed him. In his loneliness he read constantly, and weak as his mind was, contrived to write several books which are said to have been quite sensible. But the older he grew, the more he looked like an idiot. His legs were weak, and his knees tottered as he walked; when he spoke, he frothed at the mouth; and he was so awkward that he was a common laughing-stock among his coarse family.

His nephew, Caligula, used sometimes to ask him to dinner for the purpose of making sport of his infirmities; and the old man, who felt these insults very keenly, yet had not spirit to resent them, grew at last childishly timid and afraid of every thing.

It happened that he was in the palace when Caligula was murdered. A tremendous uproar took place in Rome when the news spread; the guards fell to killing the Senators; the Senators and Chærea were for setting up the republic once more; the people gathered in the Forum in great alarm, not knowing what to do. In the tumult, some one bawled, "Who killed Caius Cæsar?"

"Ay," roared the people, "where is the villain who killed him?"

A brave and wise Senator, VALERIUS ASIATICUS, got up and cried, "Would to God it had been I!"

Then the people roared again, "Yes, it was well done! he was a tyrant. Let us have the republic again!"

Just at this moment a soldier in roving through the palace saw a man hid behind the curtain which was hung before a bed-chamber door. He pulled the curtain aside, and poor old Claudius, shaking with terror, fell at his knees and begged his life.

"Kill you!" says the soldier; "we'll make you emperor."

So they dragged the old man down, and showed him to the guards, who, when he had promised to give them each a bag of money, shouted, Yes, he should be emperor.

What the guards wanted, the Senate and peo-

ple could not gainsay. The former rushed through the streets of Rome shouting that Claudius was emperor, and every man—nobles, Senators, and people—cried, Yes, he was; and it was well done. So they let Chærea be killed, with a few others, and Claudius began his reign.

I am very glad to say that what little sense this poor man possessed he used for the good of Rome. He was very silly, weak, and childish; but he tried to do his best, and, in his simple, foolish way, often succeeded.

The worst for Rome was that, like all weak persons, he was surrounded by a crew of the vilest wretches ever seen: MESSALINA, his wife, a horrid creature, and three slaves whom he had set free, named PALLAS, CALIXTUS, and NARCISSUS. Of these abominable monsters, Messalina was the worst, but all four spent their whole lives in robbing and murdering the people of Rome, and in setting a shocking example of vice.

Poor Claudius never knew how they lived, and if he had known it would not have made much difference. Calixtus, his old slave, despised him so much that he would keep him standing outside his door till his weak legs nearly gave way. Messalina bullied him; Pallas bullied him; Narcissus bullied him; every body bullied him, till what little spirit he had left was broken, and he grew a greater coward than I can imagine.

Now and then some fiery republicans would get up a plot against him. When he came to hear of it, as he always did, he would run to the Senate—

poor old man!—and cry like a baby, and say what a dreadful life he led, and how glad he would be when it was ended.

In one of these plots a great Roman named PETUS was concerned. He was ordered to kill himself, as the custom was. He had a wife, a noble lady named ARRIA, who loved him tenderly, and had followed him to the wars, hiring a fishing-boat to sail after the fleet when the general refused to give her a passage with her husband. She was with him when the cruel order came. Petus looked surprised, and faltered. She took a dagger and stabbed herself in the breast; then handing it to her husband, said, “Strike, my Petus, it does not hurt!”

For several years Messalina and Narcissus, and their partners in villainy, had every thing their own way, and robbed and murdered after their kind without the least objection from any one. But at last, Messalina, resolving to show the people how thoroughly she despised her husband, sent him to the country, and openly married another man.

Unhappily for her this was not in the bargain between her and Narcissus. He went off in haste to Claudius, and told him it almost broke his heart to say it, but he was afraid Messalina was a bad woman. The poor Emperor cried, and frothed, and spluttered, and tumbled about in his grief; then gave orders to his servants to make ready to return to Rome.

Messalina was at the palace carousing and making merry with her new husband and a set of wicked creatures like herself. They had dressed them-

selves in the skins of wild beasts, and were dancing and capering about in a drunken frolic, when one of them looking out of the window, said, "I see a storm coming on the side of Ostia."

Storm indeed. They soon saw it was Claudius himself, and the jovial party scattered in great fright. Messalina went to meet Claudius as if nothing had happened, and tried to speak to him. But Narcissus knew the Emperor too well to suffer that. She was roughly driven back by the guards, and Claudius was led to the palace like a tame animal by his keeper Narcissus. When supper was served, and Claudius had gorged himself (he was a gluttonous eater, and drank himself dead drunk every day of his life), he spluttered, "Tell that wretch I will see her to-morrow and hear what she has to say."

Said Keeper Narcissus to the guard, "Go and kill her directly." For he knew that if Messalina but saw her poor weak husband for ten minutes she would twist him round her finger.

The guard found Messalina in her garden, lying on the ground in a great agony. No one was with her but her old mother, whom, in the days of her pride and power, she had spurned from the palace. When she saw the guard, she raved and tore her hair, and shed floods of tears, crying that she would not kill herself—No, never, never! It mattered very little to the soldier. After offering her a sword, which she refused, he calmly ran her through the body, and left her where she lay, then went back to Narcissus to say the deed was done.

They told Claudius of it as he sat at table. He looked up in his idiotic manner, and said, "Well, if she is dead, give me some more wine."

After Messalina was dead, you may be sure that all the creatures who had been her friends agreed that she was the wickedest woman ever known. They told Claudius so many shocking stories about her evil doings—though not more than the plain truth—that he almost lost the remnant of his wits in his rage, and implored the soldiers to stab him to the heart if ever he married again. Directly afterward he began to look about for a wife.

There were three ladies who wanted to be the wife of this wretched old fellow, and all three tried to win his choice by pretending to be struck with his face, figure, and wit. The one who won the day was his niece, AGRIPPINA, who contrived to get into the palace and wheedle him. He was at first rather doubtful about marrying one so near to him as a niece. But when the Senators (Agrippina had taken care of them) said it was all right, Claudius said, "Oh! if they thought so, he had no objection;" and he was married accordingly. So now he had a new keeper.

Agrippina was not quite so bad a woman as Messalina; but the difference is hardly worth noticing. She was as violent and self-willed as her husband was cowardly and weak; she ruled him, and bullied him like the others, and kept him close at home, like a dog in his kennel.

She had a son of her own, whose name was DOMITIUS: him she made Claudius appoint to be his

successor, and re-named him on the occasion **NERO CLAUDIUS CÆSAR**.

It is quite touching to read how this poor old man let his fierce wife force him into doing this, though he had a son of his own whom he loved dearly. This son, then quite a little child, was named **BRITANNICUS**, and was a fine open-faced little fellow, with bright eyes and a pleasant smile. His old, broken-down father used to watch for the time when his wife would go out, to steal to the child's room, and hug him, and kiss him, and play with him.

Cunning as he thought himself, and careful as he was to hide his love for his boy from Agrippina, she came to hear of it, and was mightily shocked and frightened. If Claudius should revoke his former will, and appoint Britannicus his successor, all her plans would be blown to the winds. To prevent this, she resolved to poison him.

There was a woman at Rome at this time whose name was **LOCUSTA**, who carried on the trade of poisoning people for money. To this woman went Agrippina, and said, "I must have a dose of poison for the Emperor."

Locusta asked, would she have a slow poison, to make him die by inches; or a quick one, to finish him at once?

Agrippina said the quick one was best, for if he lingered, he might want to see his boy on his death-bed, and she wouldn't risk that.

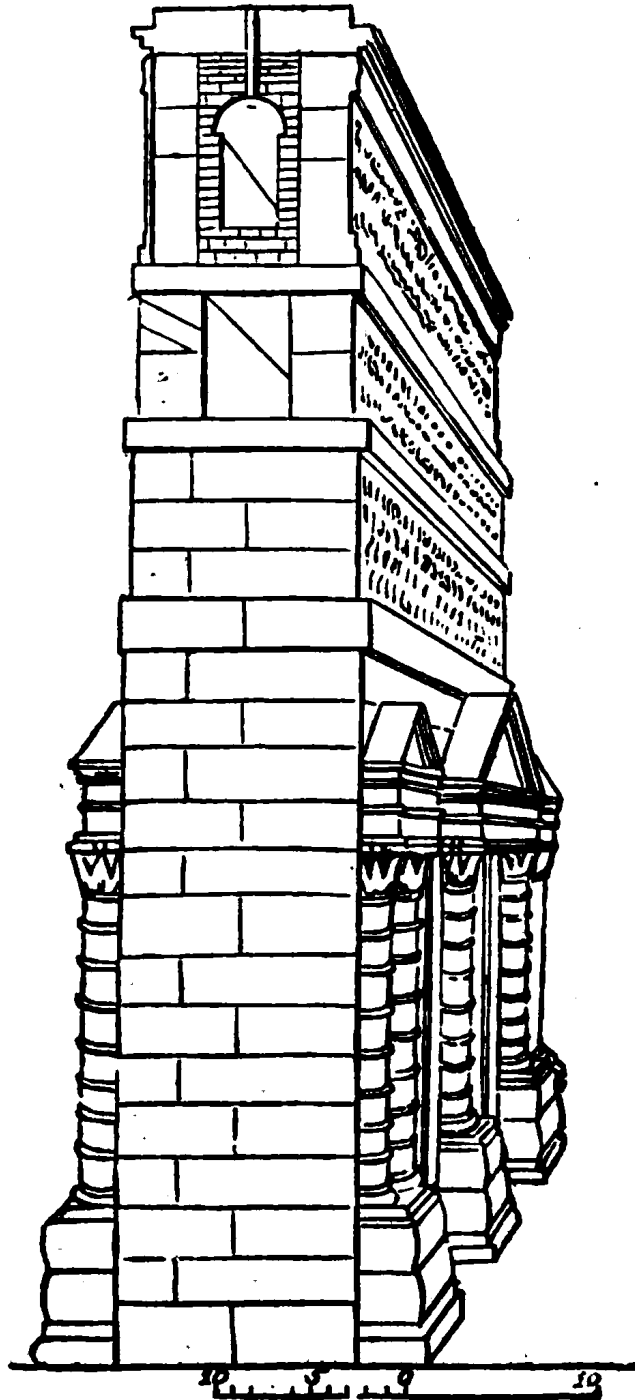
So Locusta sold her a quick poison, and she gave it to Claudius in a dish of mushrooms at his dinner.

He ate and ate, as usual, and drank and drank, till he fell back senseless in his chair. Then they took him up and laid him on his bed, and Agrippina hoped it was all over.

After a short while, however, he came to himself, and she was in despair. Claudius was such a glutton that he often over-ate himself, and was ill afterward; when this happened, his physician used to poke a feather down his throat to make him vomit, and so relieve himself. Agrippina now went to the physician and offered him a large sum of money to thrust a poisoned feather down the Emperor's throat. He did so; and this unhappy old man was thus put out of his pain at the age of sixty-four, having reigned fourteen years.

It was during his reign that the Romans first made enduring conquests in Britain. Claudius himself went there and staid sixteen days; after which he had a triumph, as usual. His generals won several victories over the bold Britons; not so many though as to conquer them, or break their spirit. Indeed, these invasions of Britain would be hardly worth noticing, were it not that they were the means of bringing into notice a British hero, named CARADOC or CARACTACUS, who was basely betrayed by some of his countrymen, and led in chains to Rome. When he was dragged through the Forum, his manliness and noble bearing struck the Romans as something godlike; and when he would not cringe or bow to the Emperor, but spoke fearlessly of his country, they all said he deserved to be spared, and he was, at least for that time.

I should also say here, that Claudius, with all his pitiable weakness, built the greatest aqueduct the Romans ever had. The water was carried on great arches through the country; some of them are standing still, and may be seen at the gate which the Romans of our day call Porta Maggiore.



A ROMAN AQUEDUCT.

CHAPTER LIII.

NERO.

AGRIPPINA was so much afraid of what the people might think of this shocking murder, that she would not let it be known till her guards had made sure of the palace and the city. She gave out that Claudius was very ill indeed, and sent for great quantities of medicine. To keep up the deception, she had comic actors brought into the palace, and made them sing, and play laughable farces in the room where the dead body of her husband lay—to divert his mind, she said.

But as soon as the guards had agreed to have NERO for Emperor—the Senate was always willing, of course—this comedy was brought to an end like the other, and every body was told that poor old Claudius was dead. Agrippina cried herself almost blind on the mournful occasion; and with little Britannicus in her arms, went about telling every one that she knew her grief would kill her.

She felt better afterward, when the Senate appointed Claudius a god, and his wife-murderess his high-priestess. Better still when she had her old rival, Narcissus, put to death. And quite comfortable when she clutched the money and jewels of a few of the richest persons in Rome; and the obsequious Senators paid her compliments, and said she was the

most beautiful, and the most virtuous, and the cleverest lady in the world.

Her son Nero they, of course, praised with the same zest. He was only seventeen; a tall, good-looking young man, who was very fond of horse-racing and music; but as bad at heart, as you might suppose from the character of his mother.

At first he said and did several things which seemed to promise well; and you may be quite sure that the servile courtiers and Senators took care that these good signs should be noised about. On one occasion he said, when they brought him a warrant of execution to sign, "Would to God I had never learned to write!" At which all the Senators and courtiers set up a great cry, Oh, what a kind and merciful prince he was, to be sure!

In a very short time he and his mother quarreled. She had intended to be the mistress, and he intended to be the master; so there was a tussle between them, in which she got rather roughly handled. To revenge herself, she began to say openly that, after all, Nero was only a usurper, and the real heir to the empire was Britannicus. Nero soon heard of it.

He goes to Locusta, and says, "Make me a poison that will kill Britannicus."

The dose made and given, does not answer the purpose; upon which Nero flies into a towering passion, and roars to Locusta that he must have another poison, stronger by far, and if it fails, woe to her.

She boils, and stews, and grinds in her poison-

shop till the new poison is made; Nero tries it on a kid, which lives five hours. Says he, "I must have a stronger poison still—a poison that will kill him like a flash of lightning."

So Locusta goes to work again, boiling, and stewing, and grinding, till she concocts a poison which kills a pig in half a minute. "Ha!" says Nero, "this is the thing I want."

Britannicus, with other boys of the household of the Emperor, dined at a side table in the same room with Nero. It was at dinner, with a great company assembled, that the dose was given him in a cup of wine and water. He tasted it, then fell back senseless.

Every one sprang up in affright. Agrippina screamed. Nero—remember he was only eighteen at the time—lay on his couch in an easy attitude: when he saw Britannicus fall, "It is nothing," said he, hardly turning his head, "my brother was always subject to fits." So they carried the poor dead boy out, and the dinner went on as gayly as before.

When they buried him, next day, they had his body plastered all over with white plaster to hide the marks of the poison; but on the way to the grave a heavy storm overtook the funeral, the rain washed off the plaster, and the guards saw what a horrid deed had been done.

Agrippina was very much shocked at this murder, as it did not help her, but, on the contrary, prevented her raising up a rival to her son. It increased the coolness between Nero and herself; and he, being now completely master, began to ill-treat her.

He made her live in a secluded house, and would not allow her to come to court. He forbade the officers of government paying her any respect; as for the Senators, there was no need to speak to them on the subject, as, of course, the moment Nero had quarreled with his mother, they one and all said she was a bad character, and they would have nothing to say to her. Nobody visited her now but one or two spiteful ladies whom she had insulted in her high times, and who now called upon her to requite her with mockery.

Nero had married some time before a daughter of Claudius, OCTAVIA, who seems to have been beautiful and virtuous, even in the dreadful slough of vice in which she lived. Her husband soon grew tired of her, and fell in love with another beautiful woman, named POPPÆA, who had already left one husband to marry a second. This second husband—who afterward became famous as the Emperor Otho—was polite or mean enough to give up his handsome wife to the Emperor, and go away into Spain.

Poppæa, being ambitious, wanted to be the only powerful woman in Rome, and was jealous of Agrippina, even in her disgrace. She stirred up Nero's mind to make away with her, saying that he would never be fully Emperor so long as his proud mother lived. Said Nero to his courtiers, "How shall I rid myself of that mother of mine?"

Said a commodore of his fleet, by name ANICETUS: "I know a way. I will build a ship which shall appear firm and solid as any in your fleet, but

which, by drawing away certain bolts and pins, will fall to pieces and sink. Put your mother on board and leave the rest to me."

Nero was delighted with the idea. So while Anicetus was building his ship, he began to feign new friendship for his mother, and sent her civil messages. When the ship was built, he had a meeting with her, and engaged her to make a voyage in a fine new ship he had expressly built for his good, dear mother, and spent the whole day before the voyage in caressing her, and kissing her, and calling her all the tender names he could remember. He was so affectionate and so kind that she was thoroughly deceived, and went on board the ship in very good spirits.

It was a still night with a bright moon overhead, and Agrippina sat in the stern of the vessel with a maid, watching the smooth sea, as the rowers pulled out from the shore. But all at once there was a crash heard; part of the deck fell in and killed a man at Agrippina's feet. Anicetus shouted; the sailors roared; in the confusion and hurry they did not pull the bolts quite out, and the ship held together. Fearing the worst, however, Agrippina and her maid sprang overboard. The sailors were after them directly with boat-hooks, and spears, and nooses of cord. In the darkness they mistook the maid for the mistress, and killed her as she struggled in the water. Agrippina—who could swim—contrived to escape to a fishing-boat with no worse hurt than a wound in the shoulder.

She knew very well what it all meant. She knew

the bay was calm, and the ship had run on no rock. Still, partly through fear, and partly I dare say from some lurking hope that her cruel son might yet spare her, she wrote him a letter describing the shipwreck, and hoping that he would not alarm himself too much about the danger which his poor mother had run.

He did alarm himself, but not on that account. He fell into an agony of terror lest Agrippina should raise the people against him. In his distress he went to his two head counselors, BURRHUS, and SENECA, and asked what they thought was best to be done.

These two counselors are said to have been very virtuous men, and to have struggled might and main to keep Nero in the right path. I suppose it was their virtue led them to approve the murder of Claudius and the murder of Britannicus, and a good many other actions of Nero's which resembled these. And I also suppose they were struggling, as usual, to keep Nero straight when they answered him on this occasion, "You must kill your mother."

There was no pretense of virtue or struggle about Anicetus, who said, in his blunt way, give him a couple of his sailors and he would soon finish her.

He got the sailors, and away he went to Agrippina's house, where crowds had gathered to inquire into the very strange escape of the Emperor's mother. Anicetus knocked the people about right and left, and made his way with his sailors into Agrippina's bedroom. Her last servant had run away at the noise, and she was quite alone.

She tried to put on a pleasant smile, and said she knew they brought her good news from her dear son, "for," and her lips quivered at this, "he was too good a boy to want to hurt his poor old mother."

The only answer was a blow on the head which one of the sailors dealt her with a stick. Raising herself, she tore open her dress, and presenting her breast, cried, "Strike the breast which suckled Nero!" They struck fast enough and heavy enough with their broadswords, and left her gashed and hacked in a pool of her own blood. So she was punished.

Still Poppæa was not satisfied. Nero's first wife, Octavia, was yet alive. She must die too. Poppæa looked about for an executioner, and Anicetus—the faithful creature—said he was always ready. So he accused her falsely of heinous crimes, and she was hurried off to prison—she was hardly twenty, and so pretty and interesting in her sorrow, they say—and after a few days she was killed too, and no more was said.

The most detestable feature in all these shocking scenes was the way the people regarded them. Every body seemed well pleased; nobody—at least in public—said they were wrong. The priests were always ready to offer up thanks to their gods when Nero killed his mother, or his brother, or his wife, or his friends; and the miserable people of Rome went to their temples and said they were thankful too.

The chief cause of this, I have no doubt, was their fear of the soldiers, who were ready to applaud

any villainy, and cut the throat of any one who com-



RACE-CHARIOTS.

plained. But another cause was the horrible want of virtue and principle among all classes at Rome. I dare say there does not exist in any part of the world at the present day a single nation or race, however savage or despised, so utterly lost in depravity as the Romans at this time.

Another cause was the thoughtlessness of the Romans, and their childish fondness for fine shows. Nero gave them many grand spectacles of various kinds; and as he

loved horse-racing, and chariot-driving, and music, and acting, even better than mischief, he used to compete himself at the games, drive his own char-

iot at the races, and strive with the musicians and actors for the prizes awarded to merit. It shocked the nobles of Rome very much at first; but the people liked it, and flocked in crowds to see the Emperor race, or play on the fiddle or the flute.

They rather enjoyed, too, the grand way in which their Emperor lived. As he always contrived to get plenty of money (by stealing and cheating), he was very magnificent in his style of living—never wore the same dress twice, had a thousand carriages in his train when he traveled, built the finest chariots that were ever seen, all covered with ivory and gold, and thought so little of houses and lands that he gave a country residence, and a town house as well, to a pet monkey.

While he was amusing the people with these gorgeous displays, a great fire broke out at Rome. It was said at the time that Nero had set the city on fire, and prevented its being put out, but this is not likely. It is certain, however, that the fire raged for six days and seven nights, and consumed half the city; and that thousands and thousands of poor persons were driven out by the flames to perish of hunger and cold, while Nero enjoyed the sight from a high tower and sang appropriate songs.

It is also certain that, while the hearts of the people were still bursting with grief and rage at the calamity, the Emperor gave out falsely that the authors of the fire were the CHRISTIANS.

Only thirty-one years had elapsed since Christ had been crucified; yet in that short space of time, the pure truths which He taught in the Sermon on

the Mount had spread, and found their way into good men's hearts in every part of the Roman empire. There were not many good men then, unhappily, or there would have been more Christians; but many who did really seek for a better rule of living than the old one, and many who were sick and tired of the old butcherings, and betrayings, and lyings, and evil doings generally, seized hold of the new doctrines with fervor and constancy, and adhered to them through contempt, hardships, and torments unto death.

Those Romans who were not Christians hated the Christians, and when Nero said they had set the city on fire, they were seized and most horribly persecuted. Some were crucified, some hanged, some stripped, smeared with pitch, and burned; some wrapped in the skins of wild beasts, and baited with dogs; many slaughtered by the bloody guards. In this persecution the Apostle PAUL was beheaded, and PETER crucified. Nero gave finer games than ever while the butchery was going on; driving his chariot round and round the spot where the martyrs were dying. It is not a little curious that on that very spot the greatest Christian church in the world—St. Peter's—is now standing.

You must not infer from his persecution of the Christians that Nero was a devout believer in the Roman religion. He scoffed at the gods, as well he might, after making his step-father one of them. But he had a little image of a girl which some old witch had given him, and he worshipped this three times a day.

He had his wars, like all the Roman emperors. His soldiers had terrible work with the Britons, who would not be beaten; and though they seized a brave queen of one of the British tribes, named BOADICEA, and brutally scourged her, and ill treated her daughters, and afterward cut her whole tribe in pieces when they rose to avenge this outrage, yet still the old British spirit was not broken, and they never gave up.

The Romans had better luck in Parthia, where a brave general named CORBULO won many victories, and conquered the country. But when Corbulo went home to receive the reward of his brave conduct, he got it after Nero's kind: he was executed.

The tyranny of this cruel monster becoming too much even for the Romans to bear, a plot was formed against him. It was proposed to depose him and make one PISO emperor. But a slave betrayed the conspirators; Nero pounced on them, and they were all executed.

Among the number was Seneca, Nero's old counselor (Burrhus had happily died a natural death), who had retired with a fortune which was really immense for the virtuous man he is said to have been. Nero sent him word to die. He answered that he was ready; and when his wife, PAULINA, said she would not survive him, he agreed that they should die together. So the veins in their arms were opened, and they lay down while the blood flowed. Unhappily, Seneca was very old and in poor health; his blood did not flow fast enough, and to shorten his pain, the surgeon opened the

veins in his legs and feet also. Still the blood did not flow, and the pain becoming intense, he took leave of his wife, and was carried into another room. She changed her mind at this, and let her wounds be stanchèd, and recovered. But Seneca persisted in dying. He dictated some fine moral sentiments to his friends, and proved that he had been astonishingly virtuous—as, perhaps, he thought he had; then, as the blood still refused to flow, had himself carried into a vapor bath, where he soon suffocated.

This plot crushed, Nero went on as before, or worse. In a fit of rage he actually kicked his beautiful wicked wife, Poppæa, and killed her. As for citizens and nobles, this book would not suffice to tell you of those he put to death.

All at once, while he was pursuing his mad career, an officer in Gaul, named VINDEX, rose in rebellion against him, and published a fierce attack upon him, relating all his crimes. Nero received it, and only laughed at what he said of his murders, but grew very angry when he came to a part where Vindex said he was a bad musician.

Other officers rose in Gaul and Spain, and Vindex killing himself in a fit of despondency, the soldiers offered the throne to one VIRGINIUS, who had the virtue to refuse it. Then they offered it to GALBA, governor of Spain, who accepted it, and prepared to march on Rome.

Nero was terribly shocked when he heard that Galba had joined the rebels. He rushed about the palace, raving and breaking vases and furniture, and talked of putting all the chief men of Rome to death

together, to prevent their rebelling too. His friends at last persuaded him to raise an army; but he required so many wagons for his dancers, and so many for his fiddlers, and he was so thoroughly hated, that the soldiers hung back.

Then he lost heart, and sneaked into the Senate, and said he didn't want to be emperor any more, and would they make him governor of Egypt, and spare his life?

When men of his kind begin to fall, they fall quickly. The Senators turned their backs on him; the guards deserted him, and said they were for Galba; his servants left him, robbing his house as they went.

In an agony of fear he seizes a horse and rides away into the country. On the way an earthquake nearly throws his horse; he quakes himself more than ever, and rides on. Farmers meet him and say, "We hear Nero has run away, but he will soon be caught:" he wraps a handkerchief over his face and rides on. Soldiers gallop after him, and ask if he knows where the rascal Nero be? he shudders, and rides on. At last, he reaches the house of an old slave, and afraid of going in by the door, creeps through a thorn-hedge on hands and knees, burrows his way under a wall, and hides in a slave's hut.

There he gets news that the Senators—ah! how they had licked his feet once—had condemned him to be scourged to death. With chattering teeth he bids the slaves dig him a grave, and stands by while they take his measure for it, and throw up the cold earth.

He had taken two daggers with him, and would feel their points as if he was going to kill himself; but when the dagger touched his skin he would draw it back, and groan, "What a fate this is for so great a fiddler as Nero!"

He was standing there still when the tramp of horsemen was heard. "Now, now!" said his slaves, "they are coming to murder thee." Even then he could not screw up his courage. He put the dagger to his throat and scratched himself; but one of the slaves seized it and thrust it into his neck to the hilt, and Nero fell dying.

The horsemen rode up, and the captain, leaping off his horse, ran to Nero and said he was not come to harm him. "It is too late!", gasped the dying Emperor; "is this your fidelity?" And so he died.

When you think of Nero complaining of the want of fidelity in his soldiers—he who had murdered every one to whom he owed fidelity—you will not be surprised at any thing.

CHAPTER LIV.

GALBA, OTHO, VITELLIUS.

I NOW come to the reigns of three emperors, whose race was so short, and whose reigns so uneventful, that all I have to say about them can be said in a single chapter.

The first of the three is Galba, the governor of Spain, who rebelled against Nero, and was chosen emperor by the army and the Senate. He was an old man, seventy-two or three at the time of his accession; gouty, and not so firm or so bold as he had been in his youth. But still he had a great deal of Roman sternness about him; thought nothing of executing a dishonest banker, and nailing his hands to his desk, as a warning to his fellows; and punished bad men without mercy.

When he went to Rome, the soldiers marched out to meet him, bawling and shouting as usual, and demanding money and rewards. But he told them he chose his soldiers, did not buy them; and when some of them looked mutinous, he sent a troop of horse to charge them, and killed a few hundreds. He acted in much the same way with the courtiers and Senators; gave no money away, and kept no idle court feeding at the cost of the state.

The nobles and Senators said he was mean and covetous; and the soldiers were greatly disgusted

with him, which will rather lead you to form a good opinion of his character.

Nero's courtiers grumbled all day long, and the guards growled in their way, till Galba chose a virtuous and worthy citizen named Piso to be his successor. Then the murmurs grew into a rebellion.

Otho—the polite gentleman who had given up his wife, Poppæa, to Nero—had hoped that he would be the next emperor chosen. Why he hoped so, I hardly know: he had no claim to the throne, and was noted for nothing except his dandyism and his wildness. He had been a great friend of Nero's, and quite as fond of spending money as that spend-thrift. He gave the best dinners, and had the best wig, and kept the best barber in Rome; perhaps these were the reasons on which he founded his claims to the empire.

At all events, when Galba chose Piso to succeed him, Otho went to the guards, and, filling every man's hand with gold and silver, asked them, would they have him for their emperor?

They said they would, provided he gave them so much money.

The bargain was struck, and Otho went to meet Galba, and kissed him, as the Roman custom was. While he was with the Emperor, a slave came to him and said, "The builders are ready." This was the signal agreed upon. Otho went out, and the guards proclaimed him emperor.

If Galba had been twenty years younger I think Otho would have paid pretty dear for his treachery. But Galba was very old, and could not be brought

to act with energy. News reached him at one moment that Otho was emperor; the next, that he had been killed. After long delays and fatal hesitation the old man at last called for his coat of mail, put it on, and sallied forth into the Forum.

There he met a Tribune who falsely said he had just killed Otho. "Comrade," said the strict old Emperor, "Who bade you kill him?"

In a moment or two the guards came prancing down the street into the Forum, laying about them fiercely with their swords. Galba's friends ran away to hide themselves, his standard-bearer throwing away his standard to run the faster. In the throng the old Emperor was knocked down, and half a dozen soldiers brutally wounded him. They could not cut through his coat of mail; but they hacked his legs, and stabbed him about the head and throat, till he died, saying, "If my death is best for Rome, I am satisfied." He had reigned seven months.

The breath was hardly out of his body when the Senate offered their respects to Otho, saying that they did not know how to thank the guards for procuring them so excellent an emperor. He was very gracious in his answers; and having put Piso and a few other good men to death, went home to his barber and his tailor, and had his face swathed in bread poultices, as his custom was, to make his skin soft and smooth.

But that night, as he slept, he fancied he saw Galba's ghost stalking into his bedroom, with a menacing air, and a drawn sword; and his coward heart failing him—he was thinking perhaps of that

traitor kiss—he sprang out of bed and shrieked for his guards.

His race was very short. The soldiers in Germany and Gaul thought they would like to make an emperor too; so they chose VITELLIUS, the governor of Lower Germany—a weak, coarse-minded glutton, with more of the nature of a pig than a man—crowned him, and marched away into Italy.

So now the Romans were divided into two parties, with two emperors. I doubt whether in the whole empire two more contemptible men could have been found than these two—the profligate dandy Otho, and the swinish glutton Vitellius. However, the Romans had nothing better to do than to fight about them: so they got their fighting tools ready, and fought a great battle in the northern part of Italy, and killed each other to the number of forty thousand. Otho's generals lost the day; and their master, seeing that all was lost, resolved to kill himself.

He had read the story of Cato and of Brutus; and though he was as unlike these men as a peacock is unlike an eagle, he thought he would copy them. He gave a great dinner to his officers, and sat up late with them, talking merrily: when they left, went to bed, and slept several hours; rose at day-break, and stabbed himself mortally. So there was an end of him.

The Senators and courtiers at Rome were in sore perplexity while the contest was going on. One day they received news that Otho was beaten, and then they ran to bespatter Vitellius's brother with

praise; and the next, they were told that Vitellius had been beaten, and then they rushed headlong to Otho's friends to cringe at their feet. At last, these worthy creatures were put out of pain by the account of Otho's death, and they said directly that they had been on Vitellius's side all along.

Vitellius came slowly to Rome, grunting and gorging himself on his way. He would not have taken the empire but for the thought that, with the money it would bring him, he might feed continually, and on the most expensive dishes. When he arrived at Rome, he sent trusty messengers to all parts of the empire to collect rare eatables, bidding them spare no labor or money to get him what was best worth eating.

The Romans generally had but one solid meal,



A ROMAN DINNER.



A SUPPER AT ROME.

which we should call dinner. They took pains with it, threw off their shoes, and lay down on couches, at about four or five o'clock in the afternoon. During the morning a biscuit and a handful of grapes, with a glass of wine, were hastily swallowed, standing, and this sufficed them till supper. But Vitellius ate four meals a day, and gorged himself at each of them in so swinish a manner that he was forced to take an emetic by way of dessert.

The things he ate seem to us as disgusting as his manner of eating them. He had dishes of peacocks and dormice ; huge pies made of the brains of rare birds, and the livers of rare fishes ; thrushes by the thousand ; scores of sturgeons ; tunny fish by the hundred ; with sauces of various disgusting kinds, reeking of rancid fish, loathsome insects, and sickening drugs. His gluttony became a disease at last ; and stuffed as he was, he could not pass a cook's shop without seizing a sausage or a tart, and gulping it

down, or witness a sacrifice without tearing a tender morsel from the burning kid or lamb.

Meanwhile, the armies in Asia thought they might as well make an emperor as the armies of Rome or Germany, so they chose their general, VESPASIAN, and asked him would he govern Rome?

He was a cautious, far-seeing man, and took a long time to make up his mind. But at last seeing a fair chance in his favor, he agreed to be emperor, and sent an army across into Italy, under his general, ANTONIUS PRIMUS.

Out from Rome marched the guards and the army of Vitellius to fight Primus; Romans against Romans, as before. The leader of Vitellius's army basely deserted his master and went over to Primus; but his soldiers remained faithful, and a great battle was fought, which lasted a whole day and night, in which more thousands of wretched Romans were slain.

Primus won the victory, and marched straight into Cremona, which was a large and flourishing city, much larger and more populous than it is now. They say that when he entered, all begrimed with dirt and blood, he ordered a bath. The servant excused himself, saying that the water was cold. "Never mind," said Primus, "it will soon be warm enough." Almost at that moment the cry was heard that the soldiers were sacking the city. And so they were. For four days it was given up to them, to be first plundered and then burned. The savage soldiers did the work so thoroughly, that of all the city they only left one temple standing; and

in these four days butchered, with horrible outrages, fifty thousand men, women, and children.

All this while Vitellius was gormandizing and grunting in his palace at Rome. When he heard that his army had been beaten, he offered to give up the throne to Vespasian, if the Senate would secure him enough money to feast his gluttony for the rest of his life. The Senate agreed ; but the people, strangely seized with some sort of regard for this imperial pig, refused, and so the bargain was broken.

Then tumults broke out in the city, some saying that Vespasian should be acknowledged, others standing firm to Vitellius. The two parties came to blows, and fought and massacred each other, and burned down each other's houses for days and days together.

Still Vitellius gorged himself, and did nothing else, when all was blood and flames round his sty. But at last, on came Primus, with his victorious soldiers, to Rome, and then this monstrous glutton packed up a few eatables, and waddled off into the country, leaving Rome to Primus. After a time (I dare say it was his appetite which stirred him to do it), he rashly returned to Rome, and to his palace. He walked through the rooms where he had so gluttonously fed—they were empty now—there was not so much as a thrush to keep him company ; and he shuddered at the thought that he might perhaps miss a meal. But he was spared this awful pain.

A soldier recognized him, and dragged him into the Forum by the hair of his head. There a crowd gathered to hoot and insult him. They kept his

head up by holding a sword's point under his chin, and jeered him, and buffeted him, till they were tired of the sport. Then some soldiers killed him. As he lay dying, he turned to one of them and said, with a stupefied air, "Yet I was once your emperor!"

Emperor or not, they stuck a hook in his fat body, and dragged him through the streets, shouting "Hurrah for Vespasian!" just as twelve months before they had shouted in the same tones, "Hurrah for Vitellius!"

CHAPTER LV.

VESPASIAN.

THE new emperor, Vespasian, reigned ten years, and reigned well. He was not cruel or profligate, as so many of the preceding emperors had been; he reformed the laws, and put an end to much of the disgraceful living of which Nero and Otho had set the example; kept a tight hand upon the soldiers; put the money affairs of the empire on a sound footing, and ruled humanely and justly. When you remember these acts of his you will not be surprised that the courtiers disliked him, and as they could not accuse him of any thing else, charged him with avarice and meanness.

He was a man of poor family, which was another reason for their dislike. Before he went to the East he was *Ædile*, or, as we should say, commissioner of streets at Rome; and while he filled this office, the Emperor Caligula, finding mud in the streets, had Vespasian sent for, and thrust some of the mud into his breast, as a hint to him to keep the streets cleaner. It was a brutal sort of hint, no doubt; still I know some streets and some commissioners that might be all the better for a hint now and then of the same kind.

The great business of Vespasian's reign was the war with the Jews. They remained quiet under the

Roman power about a hundred years, governed sometimes by Roman governors, and sometimes by kings of their own, like Herod, who were chosen by the Romans, and mere creatures of the emperors. These kings and governors ruled the Jews infamously, robbing them, murdering them, and trampling them, just as they had a mind; and so, in the sixty-sixth year after Christ, the Jews rose.

The first Roman general sent against them was driven back. Then Vespasian took the war in hand; and when he became emperor his son Titus succeeded him, and laid siege to Jerusalem.

The Jews defended their city with extraordinary bravery. They fell upon Titus's troops again and again, and harassed them day after day, and week after week, with such perseverance and dogged obstinacy that it needed all Titus's vigor to prevent the Romans giving up the siege. They attacked him by day, and attacked him by night; fell upon him with sword-men, and fell upon him with javelin-men; fought him from hill to hill, and from tower to tower, and from wall to wall, always beaten but never discouraged—never yielding an inch of ground that was not sodden with Jewish blood.

What made their resistance the more wonderful was the sufferings they endured in the city, and the divisions which existed among their chiefs. There was a Jew named John, and another Jew named Eleazar, and another named Simon, all three rivals, and as eager to kill each other as the Romans; and the moment there had been a brush with the latter,

and the Jews returned to the city and the temple, they fell to cutting each other's throats. John's men fought with Eleazar's, and Simon's with John's; and they butchered each other from morning till night, till the wretched city was blood-red from the temple to the gates. They never stopped except to rush out against the Romans, and even then they would stop by the way to fight each other.

Famine, too, oppressed the Jews cruelly. All their food was soon eaten up, and Titus had beleaguered the city so that no provisions should come in. The Jews ate dogs and rats, the leather straps of their belts, and their sandals; and at last, a woman set the example of cooking and eating her own child, and plenty of hungry soldiers were glad to assuage their famine with like horrible meals.

Jerusalem had need to be strong to hold out as long as it did under such awful sufferings. It was strong; and the Jews were more obstinate than you can possibly conceive. Even when hunger had reduced the people to that degree that the streets were empty and silent, and the whole city reeked with a choking stench of dead bodies, the cry was still "No surrender!" and the ghastly remnant of the Jews fought on as before.

At last Titus forced his way into the place, and conquered the whole except the temple, into which the surviving Jews had flocked. In that retreat, starving, wounded, worn-out, they still cried, "No surrender!" and fought from the windows and the roof as fiercely as ever. It was not till a soldier had set fire to the temple, and the flames spread

from end to end of the building, that the contest was ended, and the Jews were conquered.

Some of them fled to a strong place, called Masada, and subsisted there for a while by rapine. But the Romans soon laid siege to Masada, and the garrison saw they could not hold out. The chief, Eleazar, proposed to his men to die. They agreed, and ten strong men were chosen by lot to kill the others, who lay down, men, women, and children, to be slaughtered. When the ten had finished the bloody work, they drew lots, and one of them was chosen to kill the other nine. When he had done so, he set fire to the place, threw himself into the flames, and perished.

This was the destruction of the Jewish nation. Their city was burned, and not one stone was left upon another. When it was rebuilt, it only covered half the space occupied by the old one. At this day travelers grope through its suburbs in vague search for traces of the glorious monuments of the days of Jewish greatness. The people are scattered throughout every nation in the world. For nearly fifteen hundred years they were persistently persecuted by the rulers of the states in which they lived, though they were in general the most useful citizens they had. But under the most brutal persecution they never gave up the old faith of their fathers. Jews they remained when it cost house, home, family, and life to be a Jew; and in reward of this heroic constancy, they alone, of all nations in the world, have a history which can be traced back firmly and clearly to that night of time when all

history fades away. It would be a proud thing for us if we could say as much.

After reigning ten years, Vespasian fell ill. Said he to the courtiers, "I suppose I am going to be made a god." Still, though he foresaw death coming, he would not give up his duties, and thereby hastened the work of disease. When he felt himself about to die, he bade the servants raise him up; "for," said he, "an emperor should die standing."

So this good man passed away, and his son Titus reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER LVI.

TITUS.—DOMITIAN.

VESPASIAN left two sons, both of whom succeeded him; Titus, the elder, first.

Titus had been brought up with Britannicus, the unhappy youth whom Nero poisoned. It was said that he was at the table when Britannicus was murdered, and even tasted the poisoned cup. However this be, Titus grew up a bold and wild young man, and very often made himself much talked about by his boisterous behavior. When his father went to Judæa, Titus accompanied him, and took Jerusalem, as I related in the last chapter, not without acts of cruelty which it were better for his fame had been hidden. Under Vespasian, Titus had a great share of the government, and made himself very popular.

When he became emperor, people were rather inclined to be afraid of him. They remembered his youthful wildness with uneasiness. From Judæa he had brought with him a Jewess, named BERENICE, a sister of the Jewish king's, and a woman who had been very beautiful in her day, and was still seductive and agreeable. Some people said Titus would make her empress, and the bigoted Romans were shocked at the thought of having a Jewess in so high a rank.

However, when Titus found himself at the head

of the empire, he disappointed the croakers : reformed his life, sent Berenice home, and began to rule justly and fairly. The people were in such ecstasy at his goodness that they called him "The delight of the human race," with many more names of the same flowery sort.

It would have been well for Rome if all the emperors whom the people flattered had deserved praise as much as Titus. I hardly think he wanted to be called the Delight of the human race, for he had his faults, like other people. But they were not brutal or dangerous faults, in general ; he tried to do his duty, and was so attentive to business that one evening, when he had been idle all day, he cried with sorrow, "I have lost a day!"

It was he who finished and opened the great Roman theatre which was called the COLOSSEUM, from its size. It could seat eighty thousand persons. The outside was inlaid with marble, and adorned with statues : the ring, inside, was sanded, and so large that whole armies of gladiators could fight there. It was opened with grand shows, man-fights, and beast-hunts, and the like ; and by way of novelty, on the day of the opening a woman fought with a lion there and killed him. This Colosseum is standing still. Part of the wall and many of the seats are broken down, but the strong arches are unshaken ; and the huge building itself is grand enough, in its decay, to give us some idea of what it must have been in its glory. Long ago, pious priests set up little altars there, which they called stations ; and very pious Catholics go to Rome and pray before



THE COLOSSEUM.

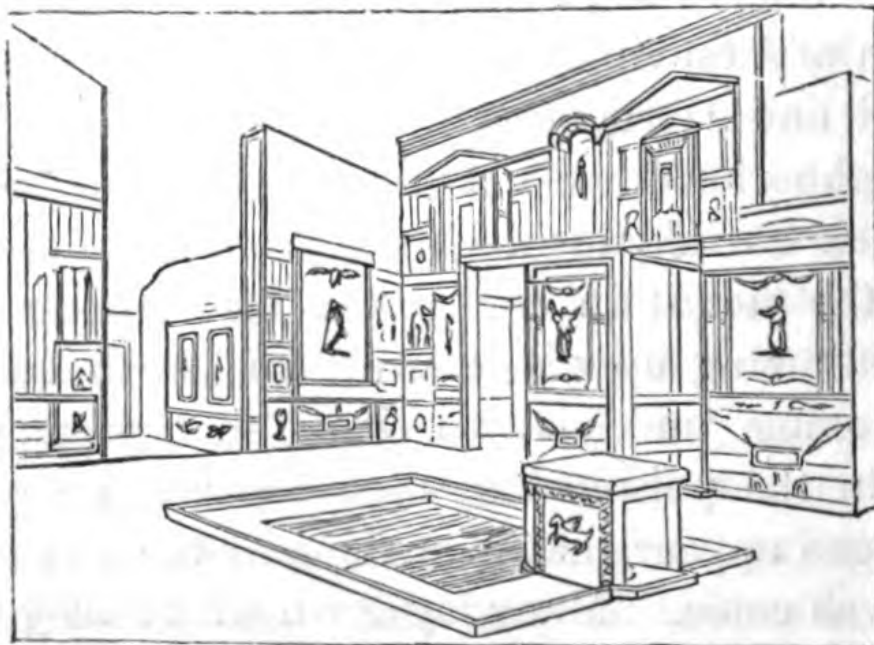
these altars, and believe that each prayer in that place wipes out so many days' sin. So the world goes on.

It was under the reign of Titus that that dreadful eruption of Vesuvius took place which overwhelmed Pompeii and Herculaneum, with many villages in the neighborhood. So awful was the scene—the sky black as ink, lurid clouds hanging round the top of the mountain, torrents of fire flaming down and swallowing up whole cities, the earth quaking and smoking, and every living thing gasping for breath in the poisoned air—so terrible, I say, did these signs appear that men thought the end of the world was come. Many lay down where they were, thinking it useless to try to escape, and were over-

whelmed. The great philosopher **PLINY**, among others, was choked by the unwholesome vapor, and died on the sea-shore. It is supposed that most of the people of **Pompeii** and **Herculaneum** escaped; but so quick came the fiery flood upon the cities, that every thing was buried just as it stood on the morning of the eruption.

Of late years, as I dare say you know, men have been set to dig away the lava which overlies these two buried cities. Sixty feet below the surface of the earth **Herculaneum** has been quarried out; and **Pompeii**, which was buried under a lighter coating, has been opened up, the streets cleared, the houses brought to light, and part of the city restored to nearly what it was some eighteen hundred years ago.

If you go there you will see ruts in the streets cut by Roman wheels in the time of **Titus**; pictures, with colors yet fresh, painted when **Christ** was on the earth; inkstands, glasses, pots, and pans;



COURT-YARD AT POMPEII.



ENTRANCE OF POMPEII.

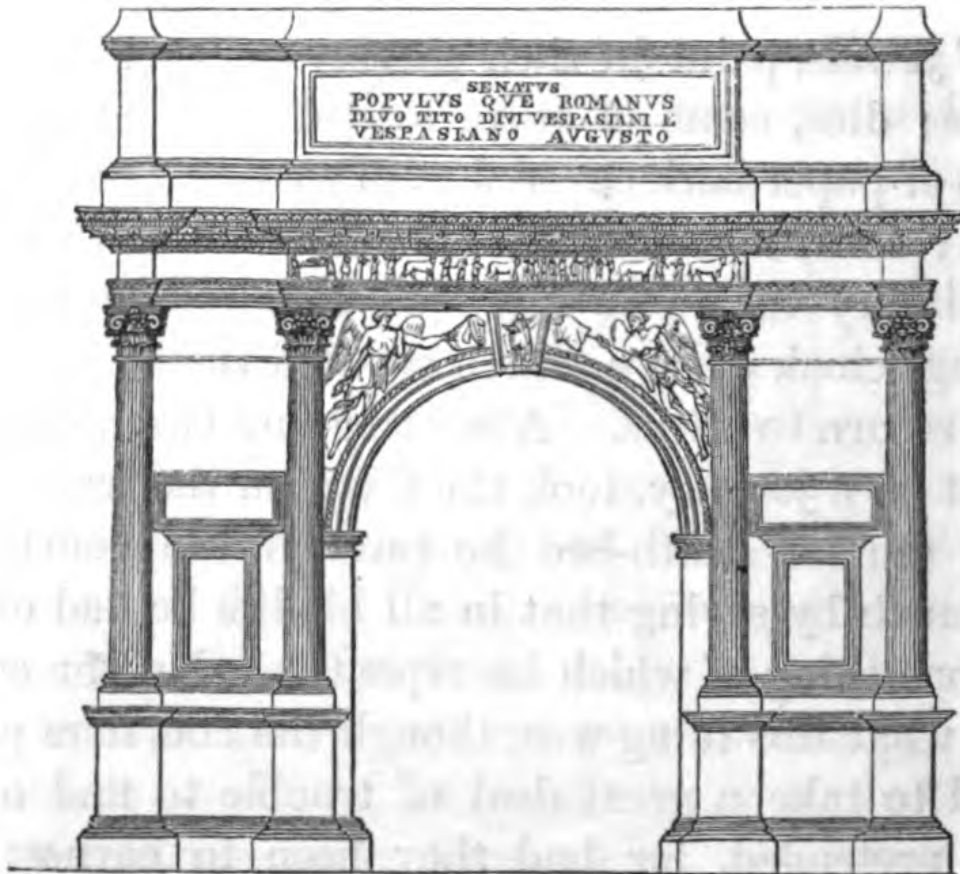
ladies' jewels, paint for their cheeks, and part of their dresses; dice, some of them loaded to cheat with; scrolls of paper bark covered with writing; physic in phials; corn, and pastry; all preserved with very little injury for these eighteen hundred years by the huge cloak of lava which covered them.

To return to Titus. After reigning two years he set out on a journey, took the fever on the way, and died. On his death-bed he puzzled the courtiers very much by saying that in all his life he had only done one thing of which he repented. No one ever knew what this thing was, though the courtiers pretended to take a great deal of trouble to find out. I say pretended, for had they been in earnest it

would not have been such a difficult matter to find out a bad action even in the life of Titus.

His brother, Domitian, became emperor when he died. He was a very bad fellow, and the people hated him. He had given his father, Vespasian, great trouble, and had tried to get up a rebellion against his brother, both of whom had treated him with more indulgence than he deserved. When he became emperor, he began to reign in a manner which reminded the people of Nero.

He was not mad; on the contrary, he was very cunning and shrewd, but he was detestably cruel and perfidious. Whenever he heard of a good and great man he grew jealous of him, and had him killed. To the last moment, too, he always pretended to be great friends with his victims; would



ARCH OF TITUS.

ask a man to dinner, and have him carried out from the table to execution; would kiss a Senator the moment before he had his head cut off. You will understand this part of his character better when you know that, though he was fond of letters, and kept learned men in his pay, the book he was fondest of reading was the Memoirs of the Emperor Tiberius.

He took delight in practical jokes. Once he invited a large company to dinner. When they entered the hall, they found it dark and hung with black; and behind each chair stood a coffin with the name of a guest on its lid. While they were quaking, boys came in with painted faces and sang funeral songs. This was kept up for some time; then the guests were dismissed, more dead than alive.

Just as often his jokes were not so harmless as this. He would kill men from mere love of cruelty; and when he was alone and idle, and had no one near hand to put to death, he would amuse himself by sticking flies with a pin, and watching their struggles. Once he took a fancy to fall upon the philosophers, and drove them out of Rome to starve. Another time he pounced upon the Christians, and persecuted them, and put them to death by scores.

For fifteen years the people of Rome bore with this abominable wretch, and no man raised his hand. As cowardly as he was cruel, he lived in daily dread of being murdered, and had the walls of his palace polished so as to reflect images like a mirror, in order that he might see who was behind

him. But for fifteen years he never saw a dagger raised to give him his due.

There is a story that, long before he had any idea he would be emperor, some wizard told him that he would succeed to the throne, would reign fifteen years, and no more. As the fifteen years drew to a close he grew very uneasy. Up started another wizard in this fifteenth year, who prophesied that he would die at the fifth hour (eleven o'clock) on the eighteenth September next. Domitian flew into a rage, and asked the wizard what he knew about himself.

"I shall die before you," said the wizard, "and my body will be eaten by dogs."

To prove him a false prophet, the Emperor had him savagely murdered, and gave orders that his body should be carefully burned and the ashes buried. The guards built a funeral pile, laid the body upon it, and set fire to the pile; but at that moment a squall burst forth, blew the pile over, frightened away the guards, and put the fire out. In the confusion some hungry dogs scented the body, and gnawed the flesh from the bones.

Domitian raged more than ever at this news. It chanced that about this time the patience of the Romans was thoroughly worn out, and a plot was formed to rid the world of the Emperor. It chanced also that, whether he had heard something of the plot or no, he had made a memorandum of persons to be killed, including most of the conspirators and his own wife. This memorandum falling into his wife's hands, she called the conspirators together,

and they resolved to strike on the eighteenth of September.

On the evening before, Domitian was in very low spirits. When midnight came, he leaped out of his bed in great distress of mind, the fear of death lying heavy on his heart. All night long, and all morning, he paced his room, sighing and groaning. A little before eleven (which was the hour he dreaded) he called a slave, and asked him what time it was by the sun-dial.

The slave, to please him and relieve his mind, said the sixth hour was nearly ended—or as we should say, it was nearly twelve.

At this he felt great relief, and began to say that the wizards were rogues, and he would hang a few of them. Just then a courtier, named STEPHANUS, presented him a petition. As he took it, Stephanus stabbed him. Domitian struggled fiercely, and being a powerful man, threw Stephanus to the ground, and called for a dagger. But the other conspirators rushing in, he was quickly overpowered and killed. So the world was happily rid of him, at the age of forty-five.

On the day he died, an orator, named APOLLONIUS, made a speech at Ephesus, in which he is said to have used some such words as these: "Strike, Stephanus! the tyrant dies." When the people of Ephesus heard, afterward, that Stephanus had actually struck on that very day, and that the tyrant had died, they said that Apollonius must be a very superior wizard indeed. He made a good thing out of it, and was a great deal thought of in his time.

I wonder myself that it never occurred to the Ephesians that Apollonius might be in the plot, and so know the day fixed. He had done nothing since Domitian came to the throne but abuse him : he would naturally be one of the persons in the secret.

CHAPTER LVII.

NERVA.

I AM very glad to say that we now come to a series of good emperors, as emperors went. Their story is quite refreshing after the villainies of Domitian, and Otho, and Nero, and Tiberius, and the others.

When Domitian was quite dead, the Senate discovered that he had been a vile character, pulled down his statues, knocked about his friends, and reviled him as if not one of the Senators had ever cringed at his feet. They did better than this, however. They chose to be his successor a good old man, named COCCEIUS NERVA, who was no relation to any of the former emperors, and had no claim upon the throne but a blameless life.

It was a strange whim of this old man—he was sixty-three or four years old, and infirm—to want to be emperor, and I am sure he soon repented of the wish. Stronger nerves than his were needed to struggle with the stormy times in which he had fallen. Rome was full of shameless wretches who made a living by falsely accusing rich men. Nero's friends, and Otho's friends, and Domitian's friends, were still alive and rampant for mischief. And the guards were there too, roystering and rioting day after day; openly boasting that they were the real

masters of the empire, and keeping quiet citizens in perpetual fear of their lives.

Nerva did what little he could for the good of the state. He spent as little as he could upon himself and his court; with the savings he gave largely to the poor, and founded schools for the children of the people. He tried to put down the informers, but they were too strong for him. He endeavored to keep the guards within bounds; but they only laughed at him. He made an effort to get rid of the bad courtiers; but he was foiled in this, as the rest.

So feeble an old man was he that his very friends made a jest of him. Once at his own table he said to a guest, "I wonder where CATULLUS (this was one of the worst villains of the old bad reigns) would be if he were alive still." Said the guest, "He would probably be supping with us;" which was likely enough, as there was at the table a man named VEIENTO, who was of the same stamp as Catullus, and quite as worthless.

Some time afterward, the guards rose in tumult. They wanted, they said, the murderers of their old friend Domitian; and they would have them.

The old Emperor went out to them, bared his breast, and besought them to take his life, but to spare those of his friends. But they roughly threw him aside, seized the men they sought, and put them to death before Nerva's very face. Most shameful of all, they forced this weak old man, after the murder, to make a speech to the people defending it, and calling the murderers the saviors of Rome.

It was the last public act of his life. The shame and disgrace of it cut him to the heart. He chose for his successor a man of known energy and boldness, **ULPIUS TRAJANUS**, who was away in Germany; wrote him a letter bidding him avenge the insult the Emperor had sustained; and died quietly, after a short reign of sixteen months.

CHAPTER LVIII.

TRAJAN.

ULPIUS TRAJANUS, or TRAJAN, as we call him, was a Spaniard. He was born near the spot where the beautiful city of Seville now stands. At this time Spain was thoroughly Roman, and Trajan spoke Latin, and was as much of a Roman as the natives of Italy.

He was at Cologne when he got the news that he had been chosen to succeed Nerva. He understood perfectly the letter he received from the Emperor: he sent to Rome to invite the officers of the guards to pay him a visit, and when they came, he quietly made away with them. He was a very different man from Nerva; strong, bold, restless, great-hearted.

When he went to Rome the people flocked to meet him in crowds. The road was choked up for miles; and again and again the new emperor was stopped by the throng pressing round him to bless him. This was thought a great deal of by the Em-



TRAJAN.

peror's friends. I am not much affected by it myself, as the Romans had a way of turning out to glorify their emperors at first, whatever their characters were.

Happily, Trajan did deserve to be blessed. He set to work to achieve the reforms attempted by Nerva, and with a strong hand. The guards he divided and reduced; they were very quiet indeed in his reign. The informers he rooted out; executing the vilest, shipping off the smaller rogues to distant isles. As for the wicked courtiers, he would not put them to death; but their trade became so bad during his reign that they gave it up, and I dare say some of them reformed and became exemplary characters.

In his civil government, Trajan was the best emperor the Romans ever had. He cut down the expenses of the state; sold several of his palaces, and gave the money to the poor; set up common schools all over Italy (they were not by any means so perfect as our modern schools, but still they were far better than any the people had ever had before); declared openly that he was the servant, not the master, of the Senate, and meant what he said; took an oath to preserve the laws, and kept it; allowed every man who chose to come to him freely, and talk to him as to any other citizen; altogether set an example which it would have been a happy thing for mankind if all the modern kings who have reigned had followed.

His private life, I am sure, was pure. There are scandalous stories about him, as there are about

every public man ; but judging him by his fruits, he must have been a moral man, for Roman morals were purer under his reign than they had been for a century before ; and judging him by the character of his friends, he can not have been a reprobate, or he would not have enjoyed the friendship of the virtuous **PLINY**, or the love of his excellent wife, **PLO-TINA**.

Unhappily, as it seems to us, Trajan was possessed with an ardent love for war. He was an able general, and delighted in fighting above all things. He waged two long and bloody wars against a nation called the **Dacians**, who lived in the coun-



ROMAN SOLDIERS.



TRAJAN SACRIFICING.

try which is now the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia; beat them, of course, and spread great misery among them. It seems that the cause of the war was a victory which the Dacians had won over the armies of Domitian. Because they had defended themselves bravely when attacked, they were invaded, pillaged, and slaughtered.

The Dacian king, whose name was DECEBALUS, defended himself and his people with shining valor and skill. When he saw that his chief city would fall, he contrived a strange means of concealing his treasure. He set a number of workmen to turn the water of a small river (it is supposed to be the Istrig)

out of its bed: when the bed was dry, he had a chamber built of solid mason-work at the deepest point; lodged all his money and treasure in it, closed up the chamber, and made the workmen turn the river back again into its course. It is even said that he cruelly put to death the workmen whom he had employed to build the chamber, so that no one should know the secret.

Ah, how few secrets are kept! Soon came a day when Decebalus, vanquished and humbled, killed himself in his despair; and one of his friends bought the goodwill of the Romans by telling them where the treasure might be found. Trajan had it dug up and carried to Rome.



TRAJAN'S COLUMN.

It was in honor of his victories over the unhappy Dacians that Trajan raised the splendid column, which you will see if you go to Rome. It is one of the grandest monuments of antiquity, as it is one of the noblest works of art. Twenty-five hundred figures are carved upon its surface, all of them perfect and admirable. The pedestal is said to be the finest in the world.

Trajan placed it in the centre of a forum, or square, as we should say, which he laid out himself, and built round with splendid buildings. Now, the pavement of this square is several feet below that of the ground. The earth has been dug away about the



TRAJAN CROWNS THE PARTHIAN KING.

column, and the hole thus made has been railed round. The popes have concerned themselves a good deal about the column and its author. One of them put a statue of St. Peter on the top of the col-



A PARTHIAN KING.

umn, as though he had slaughtered the Dacians; and another gave out that he admired the monument so much that he had had Trajan's soul taken out of purgatory, or a worse place, as a reward for his having built it.

Very little thought he what men would gabble about his soul five hundred years after he was dead.

His soul, in this life, was bent on one thing, and that was conquest. Away into Asia he went with his fighting men, and fought the Parthians, and ever so many other nations besides these, for years upon years. The Senate, when they received the accounts



TRAJAN RETURNING THANKS.

of his victories, were much puzzled by the names of the wild, strange nations he had conquered; and as they would puzzle you and me too, we will say no more about them. It will answer our purpose to state simply that Trajan got as far as the borders of the Indian Ocean—somewhere in Persia—and that he put to death vast numbers of people, seized great quantities of treasure, and found, when he had marched from shore to shore and back again, that he had accomplished no more than any common thief.

With this wholesome reflection on his conscience, he died in Cilicia, in the sixty-fourth year of his age, and the twentieth of his reign.

Before his death he was much troubled about a successor. His wife, Plotina, had set her heart on securing the empire for a cousin of her husband's, named HADRIAN; and some say that Trajan agreed to appoint him. But whether Plotina forged a will in the name of her husband, as many writers say, or the thing was done honestly, it was well understood when Trajan died that Hadrian was to be the next emperor.

CHAPTER LIX.

HADRIAN.

A FORTUNE-TELLER—of the class I described in the first chapters of this book—who lived near a fountain in Asia Minor, and pretended to read the future in the waters of the fountain, had foretold to Hadrian that he would be emperor. When the prophecy came true, Hadrian thanked the fortune-teller, but choked up the fountain with stones; wisely thinking that, as it had encouraged him to aspire to the throne, it might continue the trade, and put the same idea into other men's heads.

He had himself acknowledged emperor by the army and the Senate. Then, as he was by no means fond of war, he proceeded to make peace with the Sarmatians and other nations with which Trajan had fought, and gave the people on the frontiers of the empire a chance to live quietly and usefully.

While he was away arranging matters, four Senators, men of high rank and note, were accused before the Senate of having conspired his death, and were all four executed. The affair made a great noise, and many persons said that Hadrian was going to prove a second Nero. He said he had no hand or part in the punishment of the four culprits, which may have been the case, though it is not likely.



SARMATIANS.

The people and the nobles did not believe him. When he went to Rome they received him coldly. In their hearts they never forgave him. But he contrived, by giving fine shows and money (three pieces of gold to every citizen—I wonder where so much money came from!), to win at least the outward favor of the people. He ruled, too, justly and well, and so gained the esteem of the wisest men at Rome. His laws are among the best the Romans ever had; and his manner of living was simple and praiseworthy. He encouraged people to come to him and tell him their complaints, if they had any; suffered no show about his person, and made very little use of the grand titles the Senate heaped upon him.

He was very generous. Going to the public baths one day, he saw an old soldier rubbing himself against a wall. You know, I dare say, that

the Romans usually bathed in large bath-houses every day of their lives; after the bath, they were rubbed down, and their hair, beard, and nails were dressed by slaves kept for the purpose: it was not thought healthy to leave the bath without a thorough scraping of the skin. This old soldier, as I said, was scraping himself against a wall, when the Emperor saw him, and asked him the reason of his going through so odd an exercise. "I am too poor to hire a slave to rub me," answered the old soldier. Hadrian gave him money to buy a slave on the spot.

The next time he went to the baths the wall was lined with old men, like wall-flowers, rubbing themselves against it. Hadrian dryly asked them, would they not rub one another?

Most of his reign he spent in traveling over the empire from Egypt and Syria to Britain. There was not a province in the whole empire he did not visit; and wherever he went he improved the laws, saw that they were properly enforced, and left the people some building or monument to remember him by. In this way he began the famous Roman wall in the north of England, to keep out the wild robbers of the northern part of the island: the Emperor SEVERUS finished and strengthened it; parts of it are still standing, though covered with moss, and in ruin. In Greece, which he dearly loved, he built many fine temples, and greatly improved the condition of the people. In Turkey, he founded the city of Adrianople, which still flourishes, after having been once the capital of the country and the scene

of many a hard-fought battle. It was the ninth city of the name he founded.

He had his faults, as you will soon see ; but these travels of his, and the good they enabled him to work, ought, I think, to cover many of them. Perhaps the people of the Roman provinces were never so happy as during his reign.

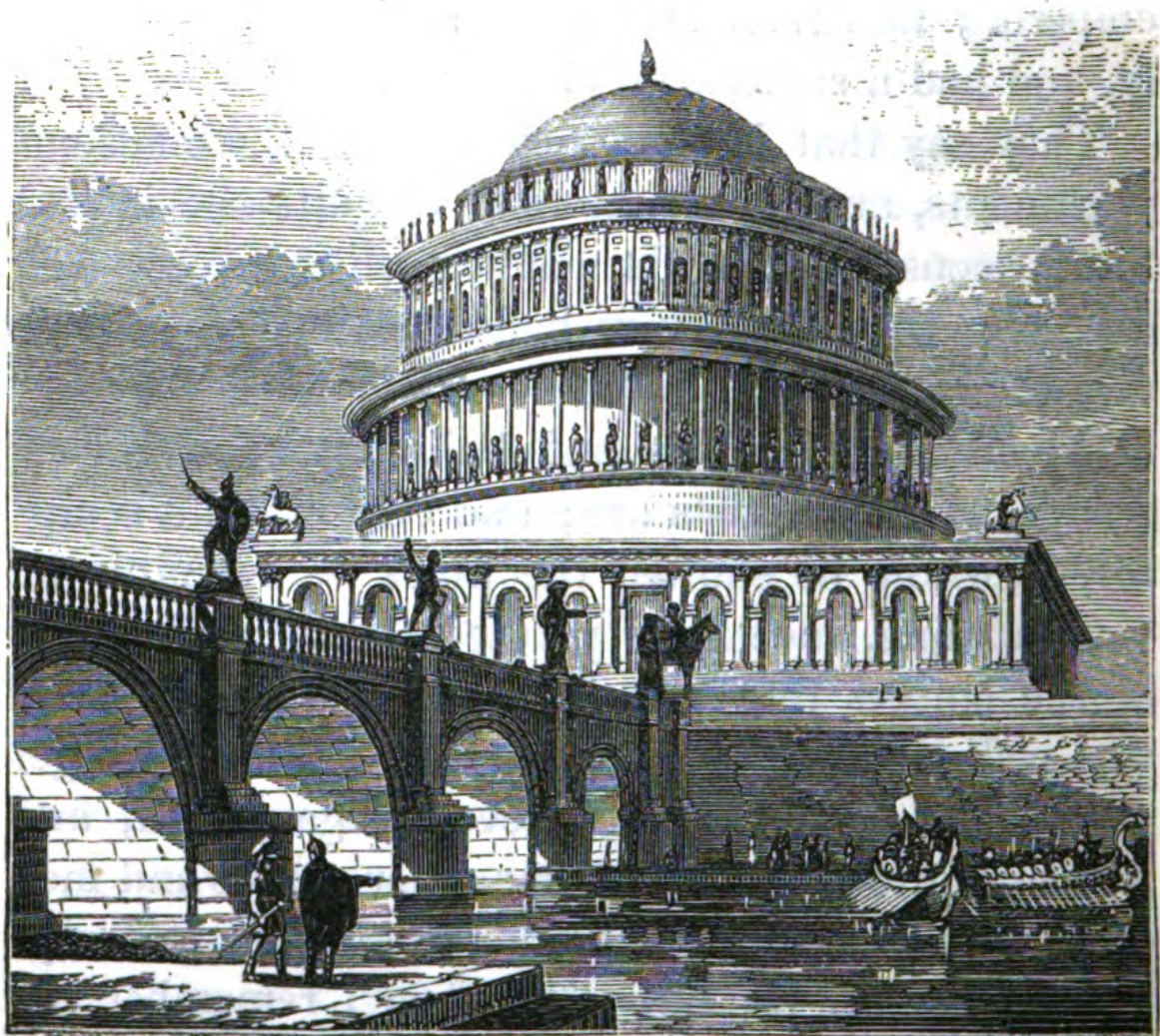
He had a ravenous thirst for learning, and tried to become an adept in every art and science. He was one of the best-read men at Rome, and could argue on philosophy with the dullest professor. He was a painter, and an architect, though perhaps not very successful as either ; wrote verses, and composed speeches, which were very well for a mere emperor ; understood the art of soldiering thoroughly, and had a smattering of science.

They say that he was very vain of these accomplishments, and the Senators were quite shocked at him in consequence. It would have been very well for Rome if her emperors had never had any worse vice than vanity.

About his paintings and buildings he was very tender, as most artists are ; and once when a sculptor, to whom he showed the plans of a temple he was building, sneeringly pointed to the undue size of the statues that were in the inside, and said it was well they were marble, as they could never get out of the door, Hadrian never forgave him, and sent him into exile. To some other artists and men of note he was also unjust, doubtless from jealousy. I am sorry for it ; but still, when I remember the emperors the Romans had had, I think Hadrian

was a very fair one, with all his vanity and jealousy.

If you go to Rome, you will see, as you cross the bridge over the Tiber to go to St. Peter's, a dark, frowning castle, grimly guarding the way. They call it the castle of St. Angelo; Hadrian built it to be his tomb. It was a much finer edifice than the one Augustus had built. In size it had hardly an equal; and it was loaded with splendid statues and works of art. Long after his death, the Mausoleum (as it was called) was besieged, and they say that the garrison, when they had spent their ammunition, threw the fine statues upon the heads of the



MOLE OF HADRIAN.

besiegers. It was taken, and for weeks the captors tried vainly to raze it to the ground. After tremendous exertions, they gave up the task in despair. The old castle was too strong to be pulled down, and in course of time it passed into the hands of the popes, who fortified it afresh, and made it their state prison. Many and many a black deed—which would make your blood run cold if you heard it related—has been done in the damp cells and silent chambers of that hoary old pile; and the people of Rome still shudder as they pass it.

In the reign of Hadrian, the wretched Jews rose again in the old way, and, like every oppressed people, committed shocking cruelties upon the Romans who fell into their power. They fought as desperately as usual, and it was not till thousands were slain that peace was secured. To prevent their rising again, Hadrian forbade them ever to return to Jerusalem. He tried to make a Roman city of it, gave it a Roman name, and set up Roman altars to the pagan gods there; but the old name soon returned, and the pagan altars were thrown down, and of Hadrian's work not a trace remained.

Hadrian was very unfortunate in his family concerns. He had a wife, a bad woman, named SABINA, who hated him, and made his life weary, till she died, as some said, through her husband's ill-treatment. He had a friend named ANTINOUS, of whom he was very fond; but some crazy fortune-teller giving out if any one could lay down their life for the Emperor his would be prolonged, Antinous killed himself. Some say that the Emperor was

willing he should, but this I don't believe. Hadrian mourned him, and built a city in his honor, and had statues of him made by scores. He had no children.

As he grew old he began to look about for a successor, and pitched upon a young man named VERUS. He was a weakly, effeminate dandy, who slept upon a bed of rose-leaves, and was famous for having invented a pie of rare succulence. As I do not know any thing good of him, I am not sorry he died before Hadrian, who chose in his stead a very promising young man, named TITUS ANTONINUS.

These family sorrows, added to much bodily suffering, had a very bad effect upon Hadrian's character. He grew morose, suspicious, and cruel. For the last two or three years of his life he lived in constant dread of conspiracies, and put many innocent persons to death on suspicion that they were plotting against him.

One of these, a very old man named SALVIANUS, who was guiltless of the charge brought against him, died cursing the Emperor, and praying that the day might come when he should wish for death and be unable to die.

The curse was soon fulfilled. Hadrian was attacked with a dropsy, which the doctors could not cure. He had other diseases as well, which gave him such acute pain that his life became a burden. After bearing with his infirmities for a time, and persisting, in spite of them, to attend to business, he lost patience at last, and prayed for death to relieve him.

He sent to all his friends, beseeching them to give

him poison. But all refused. Then he bade his doctor show him the place where his heart was, and mark it with a piece of chalk. Calling a freed man, whom he had engaged beforehand to do the deed, he bade him strike him there: the man raised his sword to strike, but losing his presence of mind, threw the weapon down and ran out.

So this poor old Emperor was left on his death-bed, groaning and crying would nobody put him out of his pain? As death drew near, he grew calmer. A few minutes before he died, he composed, it is said, a few lines of poetry to "his fluttering soul," in which he made light of dying with melancholy wit.

He was sixty-two when he died, and had reigned nearly twenty-one years. With all his faults, we shall wish, I think, before we are done with this history, that Rome had had more emperors like him.

CHAPTER LX.

TITUS ANTONINUS.

TITUS ANTONINUS had been chosen by Hadrian solely on account of his virtues. He was, indeed, one of the gentlest and best men of the time. To Hadrian and his own family he was so kind and respectful that the Romans gave him the name of PIUS, or the Dutiful. And his humane, generous behavior to all classes earned for him so bright a fame that



ANTONINUS PIUS.

most of his successors called themselves Antoninus after him.

Though he reigned nearly twenty-three years, we know very little about his history; partly because books in which it was written are lost, and partly from the reason that Rome was at peace nearly all his reign, and hence there was very little for historians to write about. He was so averse to war and land-stealing, that he not only would not attack his neighbors, but actually refused to receive as subjects of Rome some wild tribes which sent to beg to be conquered.

Of the gentleness of his character many pleasant stories are told. On one occasion, in traveling, he

put up at the house of one POLEMON, a man of letters and a churl. Polemon, coming home late at night, grumbled at finding his house occupied, and was so rude that the Emperor left the house and sought lodging elsewhere. Some time afterward an actor went to the Emperor to complain that Polemon had turned him out of his theatre. At what o'clock did he turn you out, my friend?" asked Antoninus. "At noon," answered the actor. "Noon!" cried the Emperor, "he turned me out at midnight, and I made no complaint."

He had sent to Syria for a famous scholar named APOLLONIUS, to teach his adopted son. When Apollonius arrived at Rome, the Emperor invited him to the palace. But the proud teacher sent word that it was for the pupil to wait on the master, not the master on the pupil. And the Emperor, gayly saying that it was odd Apollonius should find it more degrading to cross the street than to travel from Syria to Rome, sent his adopted son to his house.

The Christians had great reason to love him, for he would not allow them to be persecuted. Christianity was slowly making its way into people's hearts; but as the Christians generally led more virtuous lives than the pagans, and were not slow to speak their thoughts about the old nonsensical gods, they were for the most part hated by the people who professed other religions. From time to time this hatred grew so fierce that the mob clamored for the persecution of the Christians; and it was only now and then, when the Emperor happened

to be gentle and humane like Antoninus, that the persecutors were denied their own way.

Antoninus had married a bad woman named FAUSTINA, whose conduct caused him much sorrow. But he never punished her, or ill-used her: when she died, he let the Senate make a goddess of her, and only stipulated that the money which was to be spent in her honor should be laid out in keeping up a hospital which was to bear her name.

He had no sons. By Hadrian's order he had adopted as his successor a grandson of Verus, who took the name of MARCUS AURELIUS, and a better man he could not have found. Long before he died he made Marcus a sharer in the government, and taught him how to insure the happiness of the people.

In the seventy-third year of his age he was taken ill at his country house. He felt his end coming, and sent the golden statue of Fortune, which the Roman emperors always kept in their houses, to Marcus Aurelius. For a day or two he was delirious. His reason returning, they went to him for the watchword. He gave them "Repose!" and expired tranquilly.

He was so good a man that to this day his name remains a proverb.

CHAPTER LXI.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

ANTONINUS had left the empire to Marcus Aurelius alone; but he, thinking that his adopted brother had some right to share the throne, invited him to be his partner. So now the Romans had two emperors instead of one.

This brother, whose name was **COMMODUS**, now took that of **VERUS**. He was a wild, dissolute youth, very unlike Aurelius: he seemed to have taken Caligula for his model, and—though it is not certain he was cruel—was in many respects as contemptible as that very contemptible fellow. His time he spent in revels, and feasting, and mischief making. At one dinner he gave to several wild Romans like himself, he insisted on their taking home with them the plate which had served them at the meal, the slave who had waited on them, and even the carriage in which Verus had sent for them.

This bad conduct of his gave great concern to Aurelius, who tried in every way to reclaim him. But Verus was past curing. Aurelius gave him his daughter in marriage, but she made no change in



MARCUS AURELIUS.

his behavior; and her father, who was weak though virtuous, bore with him sorrowfully till he died, nine years after he became emperor.

Aurelius was a very learned man, and studious. When he was only twelve years old, he joined the sect of philosophers called Stoics. The Stoics were mostly men of large minds and good intentions, who were disgusted with the vices of the age, and taught that virtue was the one thing to be sought in the world. Their idea of virtue was not so true or so grand as that which we learn from the Sermon on the Mount; but still it was a very good attempt, and the Stoics were in general a very respectable and worthy set of men. One of the best of their doctrines was that which taught that men should preserve an even temper and a resolute mind under



ROMAN PHILOSOPHERS.

all circumstances, happy or adverse; should learn, above all things, to command themselves, and keep their passions under control.

Their chief orators used to teach these doctrines in large halls, where their pupils met to listen to them: it was these halls which the Greeks called Stoa, which gave them their name. When I read how completely some of these Stoics contrived to command themselves, I am rather sorry some one does not set up a hall or two here for the same purpose.

Aurelius became one of the best of the Stoics. He was naturally weak, sometimes too weak; but he was of so humane and forgiving a temper, he drilled his passions so thoroughly, he trained himself to discharge his duties so honestly, and exercise his power so usefully, that I know no man in history upon whom it is more pleasant to think. During a long reign of nearly twenty years he did no man wrong, and was beloved by the people from end to end of the empire.

He carried on war during most of his reign; on one side against the Parthians, on another against the fierce tribes which inhabited the countries we now call Austria and Hungary. But it does not seem that these wars were of the Emperor's seeking.

In one of his campaigns against a wild, warlike race called the Quadi, he was hemmed in by the enemy, and reduced to great straits for want of water. While his men were fainting and raging from thirst, suddenly the sky grew dark, the clouds lowered, and a heavy rain fell. The thirsty soldiers

collected it in their helmets and drank eagerly. Refreshed by this unexpected relief, they fell upon the Quadi, and—helped, it is said, by the storm which frightened the rude warriors—won a great victory.

It was afterward said by some of the officers that the sudden rain had been caused by the magical art of an Egyptian wizard who was with the army. Others believed that it had been sent in answer to the prayers of a legion (or regiment) entirely composed of Christians. Many very excellent Christians said it was a miracle, expressly performed in order to prove the truth of Christianity. It was a very lucky shower for the Romans, at any rate; and Aurelius, though he was not converted by it, stopped the persecution of the Christians in consequence, and gave to the legion which had prayed the name of the “Thundering Legion.”

Aurelius had married the daughter of Antoninus, **FAUSTINA**, an infamous woman, worse even than her mother. She led so shocking a life that the Senators begged Aurelius to punish her or put her away. But he steadily refused. He said it was his duty as a philosopher to bear with her, and he bore with her very far indeed. Too far, in fact.

Once, when he fell ill, she fancied he was going to die, and wrote to a friend of hers, named **AVIDIUS**, a very able and violent general, to seize the empire. Aurelius heard of it, and was warned to beware of Avidius; but he would not remove him from his command, or show any suspicion of his loyalty. So Avidius, having made all his preparations, declared himself emperor, and made ready to march on Rome.

Aurelius, as calm as ever, gathered his soldiers together to fight; but he was spared the trouble, for Avidius was murdered shortly afterward.

The Senate was for making examples of all who had joined him. But Aurelius would not allow any to be punished. He was sure, he said, that he had ruled Rome too faithfully to fear conspiracies; he could afford to forgive. So the lives of all the rebels were spared.

Faustina died soon afterward, happily for her husband. He loved her so fondly and so weakly, in spite of her crimes, that he wrote a book to prove that she was an ornament to her sex.

With all his virtues, Aurelius led an unhappy life. After he had been relieved from the sorrow and shame of seeing Verus scandalize the people, misfortunes fell heavily on the empire. Earthquakes did great damage in Asia. Fires consumed several cities. The Tiber overflowed at Rome—as it does still, from time to time—and destroyed vast quantities of property, and reduced many families to beggary. To add to all, the plague came raging on from Asia, mowing down the people by the hundreds of thousands. They died in Rome at the rate of two thousand a day; there were not enough carts and carriages to carry out the bodies.

These calamities weighed deeply on the mind of the gentle Emperor; he grew sad and mournful, and was seldom seen to smile.

Then toward the close of his life, he had a new affliction to suffer from the conduct of his son COMMODUS, whom he had chosen to succeed him. He

was a worthless profligate, with neither talent nor spirit to redeem his vices. His father knew him well, and mourned over him ; but he had not nerve enough to refuse to let him succeed to the empire. He was even so feeble as to allow his son to brow-beat him ; and once when the Emperor had driven out of the house where Commodus lived a gang of reprobates who had no business there, this hopeful youth fell ill of spite and rage, and his weak old father had the rascals back again to soothe him.

When he fell ill at last, he opened his heart to his courtiers and told them how anxious he was that his boy should be guided rightly ; but his words were like the wind, no one heeded them ; and Marcus Aurelius died, leaving a very sad legacy to his people. His death took place at the town now called Vienna, in Austria ; he was only fifty-nine years of age.

CHAPTER LXII.

COMMODUS.

A VERY sad legacy indeed was COMMODUS, the son of Marcus Aurelius.

His father had left him a number of wise counselors, who, during the first years of his reign, managed matters for him, and took charge of the empire. I am rather afraid myself that these counselors understood the empire better than the Emperor—that they bored him, and wearied him with tedious speeches about his duties; and, meanwhile, let him neglect them, and kept all the power of the state in their own hands.

However this be, about three years after he became emperor he was roughly aroused from the life of pleasure he had been leading. A sister of his, named LUCILLA, was jealous of her brother's wife; she joined with several nobles who hated Commodus, and hired a man to kill him. One evening, as he was passing through the dark narrow portico which led to his seat in the theatre, this man rushed at him, with dagger raised, crying, "The Senate sends thee this!" He had spoken too soon. Before he could strike, the guards were upon him; he was knocked down and killed.

Commodus got such a fright that he could hardly speak for some time afterward. When he recovered

his senses, he was wild with fury. He had his sister and her friends put to death to begin with ; then he made away with his old counselors, and several Senators to whom he took a dislike. Then he had his own wife murdered.

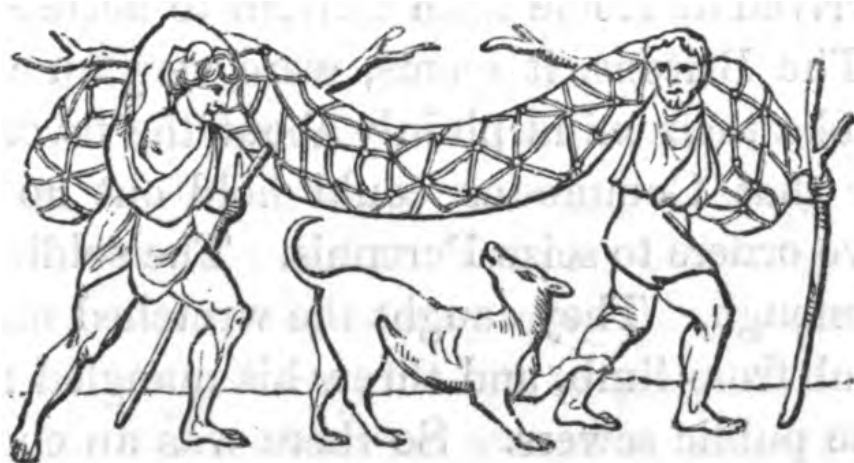
For many reigns that villainous set of men, the informers, who had flourished so proudly under Tiberius, Caligula, and Nero, had not been allowed to carry on their trade at Rome. Commodus set them up again ; and, just in the old way, these scoundrels no sooner heard of a rich man than they accused him of all sorts of crimes, swore black was white, had the unfortunate man condemned, and shared his property with the Emperor.

The people—who at first had taken such a fancy to Commodus that they crowned him with flowers and laurel when he appeared in public, and paid him all sorts of compliments on his good looks, and his talent, and his virtues—the people, I say, now began to think they had made a mistake. They were quite convinced of it, when Commodus, having got rid of all his old advisers, took for a favorite one PERENNIS, a man of bad character, and generally despised.

For Perennis ruled them with a rod of iron. He trampled all the old laws as if they had been mere chaff ; sold and gave away to his friends all the offices of State ; helped himself to the public money, and treated the Romans as if they had been his cattle. Oh ! how they hated him, and ground their teeth when they saw him pass in his splendid chariot or his silken litter ! But, as yet, no man raised his

hand. The guards were all for Commodus, and Commodus was all for Perennis.

The Emperor liked him because he flattered him, and saved him the trouble of attending to the business of government. While Perennis was selling offices, Commodus was gorging himself, herding with the vilest creatures under the sun, or diverting himself with cruel sports. It is said that he was so fond of shedding blood that he sometimes disguised himself as an executioner and put criminals to death with his own hand. He often fought in public as a gladiator, and went down into the theatre and killed the wild beasts which were hunted down there. But you must not suppose from this that he was brave. When he fought, his adversary was armed with a leaden sword which bent at every stroke, while the Emperor had a strong iron sword, and heavy armor. In the same way, when he hunted lions he always took care to have a strong network (such as you see in the following engraving) between



him and the animals : from behind this he shot his arrows, or threw his spear. He was, in fact, an arrant coward.

One day, while he was at the theatre enjoying himself in this way, an old man, covered with rags, rose up and bade him, in a loud voice, beware of Perennis ! Commodus grew very pale at the warning ; and though he let Perennis seize the old man and burn him alive, he went home very thoughtful and disturbed. The news soon spread ; and the Senators and courtiers, all of whom hated Perennis bitterly, contrived, by a thousand dark hints, to increase the Emperor's fears and fan his suspicions. Perennis had a son who was away with the army. The courtiers found some pieces of money on which the head of this son was engraved ; they bore them to Commodus, and asked him would he let this fellow usurp the empire without a struggle ?

Still the imperial coward faltered, and could not make up his mind what to do. At last a deputation arrived at Rome from Britain to accuse Perennis. The Britons, it seems, were very manly men, and spoke their mind plainly about the favorite—so plainly that Commodus could hold out no longer. He gave orders to seize Perennis. The soldiers were ready enough. They caught the wretched man, tore him limb from limb, and threw his mangled remains into the public sewers. So there was an end of the first favorite in this reign.

Then Commodus, whose mind had received a terrible shock from these troubles, promised to amend his life and govern justly. He kept his promise

just thirty days. At the end of the month he set up a new favorite. This was a man named CLEANDER, a Phrygian by birth, who had been brought to Rome by a slave-dealer, and sold for about a hundred dollars as a porter. The Emperor saw him, took a fancy to him, made him his steward, and afterward his head minister and favorite.

Cleander cared for nothing but money. To make money he not only sold offices like Perennis, but sold them over and over again to different parties. He sold the consulship twenty-five times in one year. Most of the money went into the Emperor's pocket, and the pair had a pleasant time.

While they were disgracing mankind in every way, they pretended to be the greatest rulers Rome ever had. Commodus gave out that the least the world could do to honor him was to call the age in which he lived the Commodan era. He ordered that Rome should be called Commodiana, and the Romans Commodiani; and as he had twelve names of one kind or other, he directed that they should be given to the twelve months of the year.

All this childishness and much more the people bore for a while; after a time they rose again, and demanded the death of Cleander. This time it was a young girl of great beauty who sprang out of the crowd and begged Commodus to get rid of his favorite. He was as terribly scared as before; but, as usual, the person who was nearest him ruled him, and Cleander kept his place. Then the people rose in fury, and said that, come what might, they would have Cleander's head.

He mustered the guards and charged the people, killing great numbers. But the riot still went on ; and every moment the crowd grew larger and more noisy around the palace. Commodus was inside, stuffing himself, and playing dice with his worthless associates. In rushed his sister, with loose hair and disordered dress, screaming that if Cleander were not given up the crowd would soon be in the palace.

“ Oh ! if that is all,” said the Emperor, “ let them have him, and say no more about it.”

So they cut his head off and threw it to the crowd ; butchered his children in like manner, and his friends ; tore down his statues, and destroyed his property. Then the mob was appeased ; and the trembling coward, Commodus, having made sure of the people's temper, ventured to show his livid face at a window, and was cheered lustily.

He had no more favorites after this, and the people hoped he would reform. But he grew, if any thing, worse than before. The stories which are told of his cruelty are almost incredible. He took a fiendish delight in torturing criminals ; and having been told by some Senator that he resembled Hercules, he invented a barbarous game to heighten the resemblance. Hercules was said to have killed dragons. Commodus had a number of lame and paralytic persons disguised as dragons, and let himself loose upon them with a club, and killed them in public.

You will not be surprised to hear that there was no end to the plots against this hideous monster. For a time, they all came to his ears ; and, of course,

he showed no pity to the conspirators. These plots, however, had one happy result. They made Commodus very wretched, and more cowardly than ever. He stood in such fear of his life that he dared not let his barber shave him for fear he should cut his throat, and used to have his beard burned off his chin.

At last, in the end of December, in the year one hundred and ninety-two, he resolved to inaugurate the new year by putting the two Consuls to death out of pure sport. He was foolish enough to tell his secret to a woman named MARCIA, of whom he was fond; she went out instantly, and with two friends, named LÆTUS and ECLECTUS, arranged to rid the world of him.

It was the last day of the year. At evening Commodus bathed as usual, and on leaving the bath called for wine. Marcia brought him a goblet of poisoned wine, which he drank. He fell asleep almost directly; but after sleeping an hour or two he rose, feeling very ill.

The conspirators were shocked at his recovery; but the Emperor's physician, who was in the plot, helped them out of the difficulty by advising Commodus to take some violent exercise, such as wrestling. He was very fond of wrestling, and said he would. They called in a hired ruffian, who very quickly overthrew the Emperor, and grasping his throat firmly, held him till he died.

Horrible as this monster's character was, and deeply as he was hated, he had reigned over the Roman empire for twelve years.

CHAPTER LXIII.

PERTINAX.—DIDIUS.

DURING the first six months of the year one hundred and ninety-three, no less than five emperors were set up in various parts of the empire. Of these, three actually reigned at Rome. I shall make short work of the two first, who reigned less than three months apiece.

Late at night, on the last day of the year, Lætus and his friends left the dead body of Commodus where it lay, with blackened face and distorted features, and ran to PERTINAX, the Mayor of Rome, to ask would he be emperor? He was greatly surprised at their visit, and supposing at first that Commodus had sent them to kill him, bade them strike boldly, for he was ready to die. When they assured him that the tyrant was really dead, he said he would be emperor if they chose. So they all took horse and rode through the dark streets of Rome to the walled barrack of the guards outside the city.

When they entered the barrack they roused the guards. Lætus told them the Emperor had just died of apoplexy, and he had come to propose a new emperor—Pertinax—who was, as they knew, an excellent man. They asked, Would Pertinax give them much money, for they must have a great deal?

And Lætus answered, Oh yes, he would give them no end of money! Then the guards said it was all right, and Pertinax should be emperor.

Pertinax and Lætus mounted their horses again, and rode to the Senate-house, where the Senators were sitting to see the new year in. Lætus said the same things there, and the Senators, who were always glad to kick a dead emperor, or beslaver a live one, shouted one and all that Commodus's death was a good riddance, and that Pertinax was the very man for them.

So Pertinax began his short reign. He was a very good old man, and had proved himself an able soldier and a wise statesman. But an angel could not have ruled Rome so long as the guards were there.

Three days after Pertinax began to reign, the guards rose against him. He went out to treat with them, and by giving them immense sums of money (to obtain which he had to sell all the furniture of the palace and all the property of the late Emperor) he contrived to quiet them.

A few days afterward Lætus, who had had a chief hand in making away with Commodus, laid a plot to murder Pertinax also. It was discovered, and many persons were arrested. The Senate was for putting them to death, as a matter of course, and for once, perhaps, the Senators were right; but Pertinax said that during his reign no Roman should be executed, and they were spared. Lætus was so crafty that he even contrived to retain his rank and office near the Emperor.

So matters went on—the people being well pleased with Pertinax, who ruled them justly and well—till the twenty-eighth of March. On that day the guards, ravenous for plunder, resolved to overthrow the government; and three hundred of them started from the barrack in broad daylight to kill the Emperor.

He heard of their coming, and sent Lætus—of all persons in the world—to treat with them. He, of course, took care not to meet them; and on they came, brandishing their lances, through the startled streets, into the very palace.

Some of the courtiers entreated Pertinax to fly; but the dauntless old man walked straight to meet the three hundred, and fearlessly rebuked them for their mutinous behavior. Some hesitated; but one fellow (a native of the country we call Belgium) raised his lance and thrust it into the Emperor's body. He had only time to call on Jupiter for vengeance, when the whole three hundred fell upon him and slaughtered him.

Then the three hundred marched back through the streets to their barracks, carrying the gray head of Pertinax on the point of a lance, and no man in all that great city had the heart to meddle with them.

When they reached their comrades the question was, Who should be emperor now? Said one of the guards, "Let us choose the man who will give us most money." And all shouted, Yes, that was the best way.

So they sent two or three men with very strong

voices to the top of the barrack wall, and bade them shout that whoever promised most money to the guards should be emperor. The men with the strong voices shouted with all their might, and in a twinkling the news went through Rome that the empire was for sale.

It chanced that there was in the barracks at that very time an old man named SULPICIANUS. He was the father-in-law of Pertinax, and had been sent to the guards on business by him. Being very rich, and very heartless, and very foolish, he said, when he heard the proposal of the guards, that he would give so much for the empire. And those who heard him shouted, "So much is bid."

In the city there was another rich and foolish man whose name was DIDIUS JULIANUS. He was at dinner when the news of the auction was spread, and his wife and friends came rushing in to him to say the empire was for sale, and he was the man to buy it. He thought so too; so he girt up his coat and hurried off to the wall of the barracks, and cried to the guards that he would give so much.

Then a guard ran off to where Sulpicianus was, and told him Didius had bid over him. At this Sulpicianus bid over Didius, and the guard ran back again; and once more Didius bid over Sulpicianus, and away went the guard once more. So the bidding went on between the two, one outside, the other inside the barrack wall, till Sulpicianus bid a sum equal to six hundred and twenty-five dollars of our money to each soldier of the guards. Then Didius Julianus, to end the matter, bid one

fourth more, and the empire was knocked down to him.

There were about fifteen thousand guards in the barracks at the time, so that the new Emperor must have paid a sum equal to over eleven millions of dollars of our money for his miserable lease of power.

He went to the Senate, where, of course, he was acknowledged without difficulty, and finished his dinner at the palace in very high spirits. As the night advanced, however, he grew very serious and thoughtful.

Not without cause. Three other emperors started up within a few days, as if one was not too many: one in Asia, another in Britain, a third in Germany. All these pretended to be the only true and genuine emperor.

The one in Germany, SEVERUS, had a strong army under his orders, and made ready to march on Rome.

Poor Didius was in agony at the news. He ran to the people and besought them to take up arms in his cause. But they answered that he had better apply to the guards who had sold him his title. He did apply to the guards; but these debauched, idle wretches, who could murder but could not fight, were very slow to answer his appeal. He even went to the priests and implored them to go out to reason with Severus in their priestly robes; but they turned their backs on him. In the end the miserable Emperor shut himself up in his palace, and tried to make a magical charm that would take away his rival's life.

All this while on came Severus, marching twen-

ty miles a day, no one opposing him. He halted about seventy miles from Rome, and sent to the guards to know what they intended to do. They answered hastily, Nothing at all, provided Severus would let them have a little money. They sold Didius a great deal cheaper than he had bought them.

To the Senate, too, he sent, and that worthy body decreed at once that Didius must die. They sent executioners to him accordingly. He screamed, and cried that he had done no wrong he knew of, and oh! would they spare his life and let him live in ever so small a hole? But the executioners dragged him into a bath-room, and cut off his head without the least hesitation.

He had only lived sixty-six days after buying the name of Emperor.

CHAPTER LXIV.

SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS.

THE new emperor, SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS, was a native of Africa, though of Roman descent. He was a vigorous man and an able soldier; so superstitious withal, that having met with a lady in the East to whom it had been foretold that she should be an empress, he married her directly. The prophecy had now come true, as often happens when success is foretold to men of strong will and courage.

His first business when he arrived at Rome was to settle with the guards. They were a little uneasy in their minds, as they had heard that the new emperor had said it was a shameful scandal to sell the empire; but when he sent them a message to say he would like to see them the next day, at such a place, without arms, to take the oath of fidelity to him, their fears vanished, and they began, as usual, to count up how much it was likely they might get from Severus. At the hour fixed they went to the place appointed. They were rather surprised to see a great body of troops under arms there; and quite alarmed when these troops formed a circle around them, and inclosed them in the centre with couched lances. While their coward hearts were beating, the Emperor rode up to them and told them he had sent for them to punish them. He told them they

were cowards, traitors, and murderers, as they knew very well; that they had disgraced the empire and the city, and that he would not allow them to pollute Rome during his reign.

This was very plain language, and the Emperor's actions were plainer still. The three hundred ruffians who had murdered Pertinax he put to death; the rest of the guards he sent away into the country, warning them that they would forfeit their lives if they ventured within a hundred miles of Rome.

They would have resisted; but he had filled their barracks with his own soldiers, and seized the arms. So they sulkily scattered throughout Italy, and at last Rome was happily rid of them.

The people hoped they had seen the last of the ruffianly tyrants; but, after a year or two, Severus gathered a chosen band of soldiers of his own, gave them the name, pay, and barracks of the old guards, and thus matters were placed on the old footing.

I mentioned in the last chapter that on the death of Pertinax three emperors had sprung up, one in Britain, and one in Asia, besides Severus, who was now at Rome. He determined to be sole emperor. To his rival in Britain, **CLODIUS ALBINUS**, he sent friendly messages, offering to make him his heir; and when he had quieted him, he collected a great army, and marched with all speed against his rival in Asia, **PESCENNIUS NIGER**.

Niger seems to have been a thorough soldier. He kept his army in such order that he hanged a private for stealing a fowl; and would not allow any wine to be drunk, or any silver plate to be used even

by his chief officers. For all this strict discipline, he could not hold his own against Severus; he was beaten, once, twice, thrice, and at last caught and killed. Byzantium, that great city on the Hellespont which we call Constantinople, and which afterward figured so largely in Roman history, took part with Niger, and stood a three years' siege; being defended with great obstinacy by its citizens, and with marvelous skill by a native engineer. But in the end Severus took it by famine, and cruelly punished its people.

Then he turned against Albinus, who was in Britain. As swift as usual, Severus marched away into Gaul, while Albinus, having gathered a great army of Britons and Gauls, moved slowly southward to meet him. They fought near the town of Lyons; and Albinus nearly won the day, it is said, by digging pitfalls, covering them over with thin sticks and earth, and enticing the enemy into them. But it seems there were enough left on solid ground to cut his army to pieces: he was beaten, with great slaughter. He was himself among the killed, and they say that Severus, after having his head cut off, actually made his horse trample the headless trunk of his dead rival.

Severus was, I think, a very fair average emperor; you may judge what times these must have been when a man who deserves this praise could ride his horse over the lifeless body of one whom he had adopted only a short while before to be his heir.

At Rome, during all these contests, there was great misery and disgust. The people had come to

hate war ; the nobles and the Senate hated Severus. They were foolish enough to let him know it, and openly to declare that they preferred Pescennius Niger and Albinus ; for which piece of boldness—it was a singular contrast to their general conduct—over forty of them were put to death.

Severus, being now sole emperor, might have ruled well, and made himself a great name, if he could have remained quiet. But his restless spirit was always craving for war ; and after a short stay at Rome, away he went to fight the Parthians and Arabs.

He was six years at it, fighting bloody battles, besieging great cities, storming strong forts, and doing an incalculable amount of mischief ; and at the end of the sixth year he found that he had absolutely won nothing with all his toil and trouble but a very bad name among the people of Asia. Brooding over the reflection, he returned to Rome to try peace for a while.

He was old now, and he had spent his strength and energy in these wars of his. When he tried to settle down at Rome, he fell into the hands of a favorite, who ruled him. This fellow, whose name was PLAUTIAN, was a horrible villain ; led an infamous life ; sold offices ; plundered rich people ; and murdered every body who did not do his bidding. Yet so thoroughly did he keep the Emperor under control that one day, when Severus gave an order to an officer, the latter insolently answered that he would see what Plautian wanted before he obeyed.

Severus had two sons. The elder, whose name

was **BASSIANUS**, but who was nicknamed **CARACALLA**, from his always wearing a long coat with a hood, was a wild, dissolute youth, fond of pleasure, cruelty, and wickedness; the younger, **GETA**, was less depraved, but very idle and mischievous. The two brothers had hated each other from their cradle; fought at every step of their lives; could not meet without wrangling.

Severus made Caracalla marry **PLAUTILLA**, the daughter of Plautian. Now if there was any one in the world whom Caracalla hated more than his brother, it was Plautian. He was jealous of him, and chafed fiercely at the quiet way in which Plautian ruled his father. He obeyed Severus, and married Plautilla; but he would never see her, and brutally sent her word that he would some day be revenged on her for her impudence in becoming his wife.

So, as the people and Senate all hated Plautian, now that Caracalla took their side, the favorite had hard work to keep his place. Once they very nearly upset him; and for a few days people said his race was run. He was a very crafty rogue, however; and after a short disgrace, he regained the Emperor's favor. If he had been wise, he would have seized the opportunity to escape with his ill gotten wealth; but imperial favorites are always blind.

One night as the Emperor slept, he dreamed he saw the ghost of Albinus stalk into his bedroom with noiseless tread, approach his bedside with a long bright dagger, and stab him to the heart. Superstitious as he was, this dream troubled Severus

greatly; he asked all his wise men what it meant, and they, who hated Plautian, declared that it was a warning to the Emperor to beware of the favorite.

Severus sent for him, and began gently to chide him for his ingratitude. Plautian, struck dumb with amazement, was going to reply, when Caracalla sprang up in fury, tore Plautian's sword from his side, and struck him with his fist in the face. He would have killed him, but for the interference of his father. As it was, the old man could only obtain of his headstrong son that Plautian should be put to death, then and there, by a guard. It was so done.

A short while after this, Severus could no longer endure a peaceful life, and led an army into Britain. The Britons were much harassed by invasions from the savage tribes who lived in the northern part of their island. Severus tried hard to crush these tribes, and fought them day after day, and week after week, for three years. It cost him fifty thousand of his best troops, who perished miserably in the Scottish marshes and bogs; and, after all, the wild northerners were not conquered. Severus strengthened, and in part rebuilt the great wall which had been begun by Hadrian to keep them out; but they came over it for all that.

You will find, if you should read that curious book of poems called the Poems of Ossian, a great deal said of a brave and noble chief whose name was Fingal. This Fingal is said to have been one of the leaders of the wild men of Northern Britain against Severus. If he was, I think he deserved to triumph over the Romans; Severus, with all his good quali-

ties, makes but a sorry figure beside him. But whether there ever was a chief named Fingal, or a poet named Ossian, is, as you know, a matter of some doubt.

Severus had set his heart on leaving the empire to his sons, and fitting them for the task of ruling. Caracalla he had admitted, some time before, to a share of the power with the name of Emperor. Now this hopeful youth laid a plot to dethrone his father. It came to the ears of Severus, who was cruelly shocked at his son's ingratitude. At first he thought of punishing him ; but his love for his boy prevailed in the end, and he forgave him.

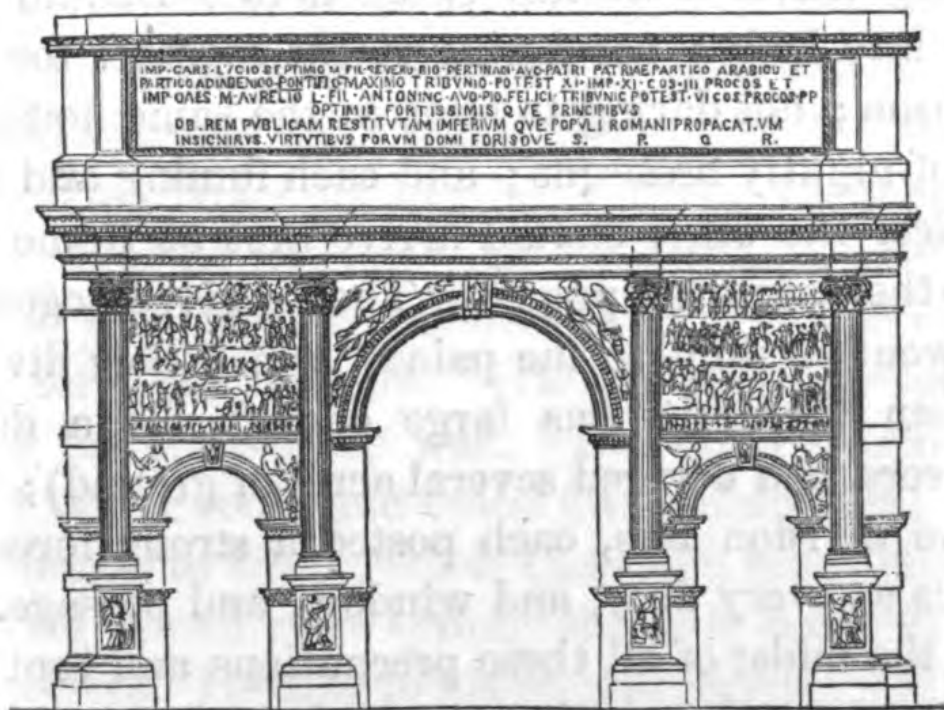
Caracalla promised to be a dutiful son after this ; and the next time he went out riding with his father he dropped behind him, drew his sword, and ran at him to kill him. The guards set up a loud cry at the shocking sight. Severus turned sharply round and saw his unworthy son with his sword raised.

He went sorrowfully home, and sent for Caracalla. When he came, he found his father lying on his bed. The old man reproached him with his villainy, and said, "If you want to kill me, take that sword and do it now. You are young and strong ; I am old and infirm, helpless on this bed. You can easily kill me. Strike !" The murderer cowered, and slunk out of his father's presence.

The old Emperor did not last long after this scene. When he lay on his death-bed (at York, in England), tossing and groaning in his pain, he complained bitterly that all his victories had led to nothing, and that having raised himself above every

one in the world, he was the most miserable man it contained. Still, to the last, his restlessness clung to him. The day he died, the guard asked him for the countersign. He gave, "Let us be up and doing!"

He was sixty-five when he died, and had reigned nearly eighteen years. He is best remembered now by a triumphal arch which he set up at Rome in honor of these wretched wars of his in Asia: it is still standing, and is one of the most conspicuous and best preserved monuments in the Forum. He is also remembered, to his disgrace, as the author of a cruel persecution of the Christians, who were very numerous in his reign, and very savagely hated by all the vicious people in the empire.



ARCH OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS.

CHAPTER LXV.

CARACALLA.—MACRINUS.—ELAGABALUS.

THE moment Severus was dead, his two sons, Caracalla and Geta, whom he had appointed to succeed him as joint emperors, started to go to Rome. Almost the last entreaty of their father to those two young men was that they should love each other; but each knew the other too well to waste time in attempting any thing of the kind.

They traveled at full speed across Britain and Gaul into Italy; not daring to eat together for fear of poison; not daring to sleep in the same house for fear of nightly assassins; and each fuming and fretting lest the other should arrive first at Rome and seize the sovereign power. They arrived together, and went straight to the palace, which they divided between them (it was large enough for a dozen emperors, and covered several acres of ground); and on the division line, each posted a strong force of guards at every door, and window, and passage.

In the midst of all these precautions and brotherly attentions they had to bury their father, whose ashes they had brought from Britain. They honored his memory in a strange manner. A wax image of his body was made, and laid in the imperial bed; and the court physicians gave out that the Emperor Severus was very ill. Next day the Senators (who

knew very well he was dead) flocked to the palace to inquire how he was, and the physicians answered he was very ill, poor man! Next day, same farce, and the day after that; till the seventh day, when the physicians appeared in public with very long faces, and said the good old Emperor was dead and gone at last. Then they burned him, wax figure and all; taking good care to fasten an eagle on the top of the funeral pile, to fly away with his soul to heaven.

His widow, the new emperors' mother, JULIA, was made very unhappy by the quarrels of her sons. She could hardly prevent their falling on each other in the streets; and she bewailed her sad fate in having given birth to two such bitter enemies. One day Caracalla went to her, and told her that he had determined to make friends with his brother, no matter how: let her bring them together, and they would be reconciled in her presence.

The good woman was overjoyed at the news, and sent for Geta directly. He was loth to obey: he knew his brother too well. But Julia insisted: he went to her room and found Caracalla there. They had begun to speak, when Caracalla made a signal. Several armed men sprang out of a closet and fell upon Geta. He flew to his mother, crying, "Mother, they want to murder me!" She clasped him in her arms. But in her arms they killed him, Caracalla himself striking him with his sword. When he fell, his mother's gray hairs and widow's dress were bedabbled with his blood.

Caracalla ran directly to the guards and told

them a long story about an attack having been made on himself and his brother; adding, that he had happily escaped, but that Geta had fallen. No one believed him. But that mattered little. When he offered money to the guards, they said they were satisfied, and so he began to reign alone.

From a man who had murdered his brother and tried to murder his father, you know what might be expected. During the six years of Caracalla's infamous reign he proved himself a worthy rival of Caligula and Nero; and worse than either of these, for his cruelties and his horrible oppressions afflicted the whole Roman empire, while theirs had been confined for the most part to the city of Rome.

Having killed his brother, he next butchered all his friends, and every one who seemed to regret him. His old mother only saved her life by smiling and appearing pleased whenever she saw the murderer. A famous lawyer (whose opinions are quoted in the courts to this day), PAPINIAN, he executed because, when the Emperor had asked him to make a speech in his favor, he boldly replied that it was easier to commit a parricide than to defend it. It is said that he put to death in all twenty thousand persons in the city of Rome alone.

Two or three years afterward it came to his knowledge that the people of the great and rich city of Alexandria, in Egypt, had spoken ill of him on account of the murder of his brother. He marched thither with a great army, summoned all the young men of the place to meet him, massacred them all, then let his soldiers loose on the place for three

days, bidding them plunder, burn, and kill till their strength failed them.

This frantic madman fancied he bore some resemblance to ALEXANDER THE GREAT of Macedon. His courtiers assured him that he was the perfect image of Alexander in every way. In order to keep up the likeness, he resolved to carry on great wars. So he ravaged Gaul and Germany, and once, at least, got badly beaten by the brave Germans, and was forced to buy peace with an enormous sum of money; ravaged Parthia, and other Asiatic countries as well; sometimes victorious, sometimes beaten, but always bloody-minded, cruel, and cowardly.

The Romans, for their part, were very glad when he was away. They lived a life of wearing misery while he was at Rome. Like most bad men, he was continually haunted by visions: he would fancy he saw his brother or his father at his bedside of a night, coming to take vengeance on him; even in daylight, he could not bear to be left alone. When he had been badly frightened by these fits of remorse, he would soothe his feelings by butchering some of the citizens. He made a dancer general of the army, and a chariot-driver his chief counselor, and seemed to try how he could best show his contempt for the people.

To the army he was always liberal, and they liked him in return. He used to say openly, that he wished the time would come when he could seize all the property of the empire and give it to his dear soldiers. As it was, he coined base money in order to reward them by cheating the people; and gave to all

the males in the empire the empty right of citizenship, in order to be able to tax them the more heavily.

He kept in his pay at Rome a pack of idle fellows who pretended to be able to read the future by a number of absurd tricks ; and while he was away at the seat of war in Asia, these fellows would send him all sorts of messages for his guidance and information. One day there arrived from these prophets a letter warning Caracalla to beware of one **MACRINUS**. It chanced that the letter fell into the hands of this very Macrinus. He knew what he might expect if Caracalla read it : he kept it to himself, and hired a soldier to kill the Emperor.

The deed was quickly done. Caracalla set out on a journey to Emesa, a few days afterward. On the way, he alighted from his horse ; the murderer walked up to him and struck him dead.

When the news of his death spread, the soldiers wailed and groaned over him as though he had not been a curse to mankind. And out of all the army there was no man who wailed and groaned so loudly as Macrinus. The way he wept over the poor, dear, good Emperor, was touching in the extreme.

After three days of this severe affliction, he said he would master his feelings and be emperor himself, if the soldiers had no objection ; and not having a better man at hand, they chose him accordingly. He sent word to the Senate, and though at first there was some objection to him, as he was an African of low birth, and had his ears pierced for earrings like many of the slaves, in the end he was acknowledged, and all went on smoothly.

He forced Caracalla's mother to starve herself to death, and put out of the way a few other friends of the late Emperor's ; but no one thought any thing of this. He would have got on very well, probably, but that he, too, tried his hand at a war with the Parthians, who beat him in two successive battles, and forced him to pay over an immense sum of money. This disgusted the soldiers, who said—and rightly too, I dare say—that the Moor Macrinus was a coward.

Their murmurs reached the ears of a very bold and high-spirited lady, named JULIA MÆSA—the sister of Julia, Caracalla's mother—who was living at Emesa, in Syria. She had two daughters, each of whom had a son. She determined to make a bold stroke for the elder of these two grandsons of hers. She had great wealth ; with this she easily bought up a legion or two, and made ready to conquer the empire.

Her grandson, who had a string of names too long to enumerate here, was best known by that of ELAGABALUS, which he borrowed from the sun-god of the Syrians. He was a tall, handsome boy, about thirteen years of age, and bore some resemblance to his second cousin, Caracalla. This helped him with the soldiers, who were not forgetful of the favor Caracalla had always shown them.

When Macrinus heard of the revolt, he sent a detachment of troops to put it down, and wrote to the Senate that a couple of women had been doing mischief, and would be shortly chastised. But in a few days he received a parcel wrapped in fine linen, and addressed to him : when he opened it, he found it

contained the head of the commander of the detachment he had sent to Emesa.

Then he saw the matter was serious. He gathered his army together and marched to meet his rival. Julia Mæsa had collected an army too; they met near Antioch, and a bloody battle was fought. Fortune seemed to favor Macrinus; he was about to win the day, when his heart failed him, as it had often done before, and he ran away. This disgusted his soldiers to that degree that they deserted his standard and joined Elagabalus.

In his flight Macrinus was caught and put to death, after having reigned over the empire about fourteen months.

So now the emperor was a child not fourteen, who had done nothing all his life but dress in fine clothes and jewels, and worship the sun in his great temple at Emesa. He was naturally a willful boy, with wicked propensities and filthy habits; and I dare say if the world had been searched for the worst place for him, not one could have been found to answer as well as the Imperial Palace at Rome.

Thither he went—this boy-emperor—with his mother and grandmother, and a long string of Syrian nurses and attendants. That unlucky Senate, on receiving the letter from Macrinus which I have mentioned, had straightway declared Elagabalus and his mother, and all his kith and kin, public enemies. They were now made to smart for it in prisons, and on scaffolds, in the old way.

To make up for the Senators who were killed, Julia Mæsa and her daughter had seats in the Sen-

ate, and took part in its discussions. It was something new to the Romans to see women-Senators, and they showed their dislike of it as openly as they dared; but the women enjoyed it amazingly; so much so, that the Emperor's mother set up a female Senate as well, to make laws about fashions, and dress, and etiquette. I dare say there was a good deal of talking done in that body.

All this time the child-emperor was behaving like a froward, foolish, bad boy. He dressed in silk which cost prodigiously dear; wore bracelets and collars of gold, and a tiara of gold on his head, in the Eastern fashion: painted his face, and slept on silver beds under perfumed feathers and silks. Some-



THE TIARA.

times he pretended to be a woman, and dressed in female dress, had himself called Madam, and Empress, and even got married to a chariot-driver, named HIEROCLES, of whom he was fond. He was a gluttonous boy, and fed voraciously; had dinners at which tongues of nightingales and peacocks were served up; offered great rewards for new sauces and new dishes, and thought nothing of killing a cook who made a dish that didn't please him. The Romans were greatly disgusted at all this folly; but what could they expect from a Syrian boy?

I am not surprised myself, considering his age and education, and the vile herd of courtiers who surrounded him, that he did worse things than these. That he married four wives—the young reprobate!—and got rid of them all after a few weeks' marriage, strangling some, exiling others. That he led a horribly profligate and debauched life; so profligate as even to shock the hardened nobles of Rome. Or that he spent the revenue of the state in building a great temple to the Syrian sun-god; and when it was built, publicly married the god to Venus, the Roman goddess of love, and capered and danced in his silken robes round the altar at the marriage feast.

His old grandmother saw all these crimes and follies, and began to repent that she had made him emperor. She went to him, and said he must appoint his cousin, ALEXANDER SEVERUS (another grandson of hers), to be his heir. Elagabalus, who did not like his cousin, answered that he would rather not. But his grandmother insisting, he gave way, and Alexander was regularly appointed.

The wicked boy chuckled to himself as he thought how easily he would outwit his grandmother. Choosing a quiet day, when he knew his cousin was in the palace, he sent a party of guards to murder him. It chanced, however, that the guards were out of temper with Elagabalus: after a little reflection they rose in a body and marched against him instead.

They caught the wretched boy, and thought to make away with him at once. But he prayed so earnestly to be spared, and promised so firmly to mend his life, and to give them more money than heretofore, that they agreed to spare him. They made him promise to put away all his vile companions. He pleaded piteously for his friend the chariot-driver Hierocles. "Take all," he said, "but leave me my dear Hierocles!" But the guards were firm; and Hierocles, who richly deserved his fate, was given up and executed. With this sacrifice, a good deal of money, and ever so many solemn oaths from the boy-emperor, the guards were satisfied.

He had no sooner escaped this peril than he began to plot vengeance against the soldiers. He was such an idiot that they soon found out what he was doing. On a day fixed they rose again, and this time they resolved to make an end of him.

He was warned, and ran, with his mother, to hide himself. He took shelter in a dark and loathsome outhouse, and lay there, trembling and crying in his mother's arms, when the guards found him. They soon dragged him out, killed him and his mother, kicked their bodies through the streets till there

was nothing human in their appearance, then threw them into the Tiber.

He was barely eighteen at the time of his death, and had not reigned four years. Yet so infamous were his vices that his name has become a proverb, and his character is as well known as that of any Roman emperor.

CHAPTER LXVI.

ALEXANDER SEVERUS.

NOW there was another boy-emperor, but a good one, for a wonder. Young Alexander Severus, the grandson of Julia Mæsa, had a good mother, MAMÆA, who is suspected of being at least half a Christian. He was thirteen at the time he began to reign; but, unlike his cousin, he was very submissive to his mother and grandmother, and the two women ruled the empire in his name.

As he grew up his good qualities strengthened themselves. He was frugal and temperate; loved the people, and tried to do them good; put down the herds of informers and other vermin who had infested Rome under the late emperors; respected the Senate, and always acted as though he were the servant, not the master, of the people.

Some said he was a Christian. I do not think so. He had no religion, but saw good points in all, and respected all. He built a fine temple, in which all the religions of the Roman world were represented, and all the men who had done good to mankind. There was SOLON there, and MOSES; ABRAHAM and ORPHEUS; CATO and ALEXANDER; and in the same temple stood a statue of CHRIST. To us to-day there appears something blasphemous in this, but in a Roman emperor of the third century it

showed a worthy spirit of tolerance. Severus liked the Christians, and had many of them about him and in his service. Some of the greatest of the early Christian writers have shown their gratitude by commemorating his virtues.

He was a Christian in one point. He believed that the great maxim of the Gospel—"As ye would that men should do to you, so do ye to them"—was the corner-stone of all true morality. He had the words engraven on brass and on stone, and placed over the doors of the palace and several of the public buildings. In his conversation he constantly repeated them, and made all his friends and servants learn them, and keep them ever in mind.

When I think of this Syrian boy, in the heart of depraved, rotten Rome—in the teeth of the debauched courtiers and reptile Senate, singling out this golden rule of conduct, and striving to make it his own and others' guide through life, I am lost in admiration; though my admiration turns to pity when I see what small fruit sprang from such excellent seed.

Alexander was very respectful and submissive to his grandmother. Too submissive, in fact. This old woman had made up her mind to be the real Emperor of Rome, and she was so for many years. She had a hankering after money and power. To obtain the first, she committed many unjust acts, and despoiled several rich persons, always in Alexander's name. To secure the last, she kept her grandson tied to her skirt. When he married, she grew jealous of his wife, and forced him to put her

away (though she was innocent and virtuous), and subject her to cruel hardship.

Worse than his grandmother were those pests the guards. They were never quiet for a twelvemonth. They would rise, and rise, and rise again, time after time, and wrench money from the Emperor, till he had hardly enough left to keep up the palace. They feared neither god nor man. When one of Alexander's counselors—the great lawyer ULPIAN—tried to check their turbulence, they rose in a fury, and actually tore him in pieces before the Emperor's face.

Now and then the intolerable behavior of these ruffians roused the people to arms. Then there would be fights in the streets, in which the people generally got the worst, and hundreds of lives were lost. Once, during Alexander's reign, the Romans, finding that neither their wives nor their property were safe, rose with one accord, and fought for three days with the guards. The people won the victory. But the guards, when they found themselves beaten, began to set fire to the city; and the victorious citizens, to save their property, were forced to pay a large sum of money to these bandits.

Alexander saw all this, and could not help it. He was no great favorite with the soldiers, as it was. On one or two occasions he had punished some of them severely; and a very little would have induced them to turn against him and set up some one else. A strong man like Septimius Severus would have braved the danger and put the guards down, or died in the attempt. But Alexander was too mild and weak for that.

After eight years' reign, war broke out in the Roman dominions in Asia. The Persians had risen under their great king, ARTAXERXES, and invaded the Roman provinces. Alexander led an army against them, and after two years marching and counter-marching, came up with Artaxerxes on the bank of the Euphrates and defeated him.

He had little time to enjoy his victory. News came that the Germans had risen and were ravaging Gaul. So Alexander had to take ship with all his army, and hasten back to Europe, and to Gaul.

The tide had turned. In the early lifetime of the republic it was the Gauls who swooped down upon Italy and ravaged it. Under the later republic, and the earlier empire, it was the Romans who carried fire and sword into Gaul and ravaged it. It was now the turn of the Gauls again. You shall see with what interest they repaid their Roman tyrants.

Alexander landed in Gaul and began his march. But before he had gone a great way he was waylaid by a troop of assassins, and murdered, together with his mother.

He was but twenty-nine at the time. Had he lived, he would probably have been one of the greatest sovereigns of Rome. As it is, considering the temptations to which he was exposed, and the mastery his grandmother had obtained over him, I think we can afford to say he was a good emperor.

CHAPTER LXVII.

MAXIMIN.—GORDIAN I. AND II.—MAXIMUS.—BALBINUS.—
GORDIAN III.

DURING the nine years which followed the murder of Alexander Severus, no less than six emperors reigned. Their reigns are so mixed up together, that I shall put them all into one chapter.

The first of the six was MAXIMIN, who had hired the murderers to kill Alexander. He was a Thracian by birth. He first went to Rome under Septimius Severus, and attracted great notice by his size and strength. They say he was eight feet high, and that he would eat forty pounds of meat, washed down with seven gallons of wine, in a day; but I think the feet, and the pounds and the gallons, must have been small of their kind. However, he was no doubt very strong, and overthrew, one after another, the best wrestlers at Rome, to the number of a dozen or more; was so active as well, that he ran by the side of the Emperor's horse while the animal was at full gallop, without feeling tired by the exercise.

Severus thought so much of his skill and strength that he made him an officer; and so, in course of time, he came to command an army, and when he had murdered his emperor, to be chosen in his room by the soldiers.

He was, in truth, at best a brutal savage, more like a bear than a man. After killing Alexander, he sent a number of his friends to keep him company—among them, all the Christians whom he had promoted. As he was ignorant and coarse, he hated all who possessed learning and refinement; and whenever they fell in his way he put them to death likewise. Some he crucified; others he thrust into the skins of wild beasts and hunted down; and not a few he made his soldiers batter to death with clubs—himself, like a great brutal giant, battering away in their midst.

The only thing this brute did during his reign was to ravage Germany. He fought the Germans for the space of two years, and boasted that during that time he had laid waste four hundred miles of territory, burning the towns and villages, and slaughtering every living thing he met on his way. Ah, what a store of vengeance these Germans were laying up for the Romans!

Every body hated Maximin. All over the empire people waited anxiously to hear of his death, and hoped that some one would rise against him and dethrone him.

After a time there did arise a band of rebels in Africa, who quickly put to death the governor Maximin had set over them. They looked about for an emperor to take his place, and saw no one so much to their mind as a very old and virtuous officer whose name was GORDIAN. He was eighty years of age at the time, and thought, and rightly too, that it was time for him to have done with

public life. He said as much to the rebels; but they bluntly answered that he must either be emperor or die.

He asked them would they let his son, a man of forty or so, whose name was GORDIAN too, be emperor with him, to share the burdens of government? They said they had no objection: and the two Gordians, father and son, were led to Carthage (which had risen from its ruins and was a flourishing city once more) and crowned emperors as Gordian the First and Gordian the Second.

Word was sent to Rome directly, and the Senate was asked would it acknowledge the Gordians?

For many years there had never been such joy at Rome as there was when the news arrived. Not only on account of the hatred every one bore to Maximin, which indeed was intense enough to make the Romans rejoice at the prospect of any new emperor, but also because the Gordians were known and respected, both from their own virtues and their descent from the famous Gracchi. They were proclaimed emperors with great rejoicings, and every one swore to defend them to the death.

So now the parts were changed. Carthage was ruling Rome.

When Maximin, who was in Germany still, heard of the revolution, he raged more like a wild beast than a man. He rolled himself on the ground, and gnashed his teeth, and tore his clothes; then he rose and hewed and hacked the walls of his house with his sword, like a great overgrown senseless giant as he was. But all this rage did him little

good. His soldiers were very cool indeed; and when he proposed to them to march on Rome and burn down the whole city, they hung back and said they would think of it.

Meanwhile more changes took place. A Roman officer in Africa rose against the Gordians, and led an army up to Carthage. Gordian the younger armed the people as best he could; he had, somehow, no regular troops in the place; out into the plain he led a band of men, some with spades, some axes, some pitchforks, in their hands. These being without discipline or proper means of defense, were routed and slain for the most part; their chief, Gordian the son, being one of the first killed. When the fugitives ran into Carthage bearing the bad news, Gordian the father said he had foreseen it all along, and went home and hanged himself. So there was a speedy end of the Gordians.

Maximin hoped that their death would leave him master of Rome once more. But the people hated him too much for that. The Senate decided that new emperors must be chosen. The men pitched upon were **CLODIUS PAPIENUS MAXIMUS**, the son of a blacksmith, and a stern, strict soldier, and **CÆLIUS BALBINUS**, a polished and refined gentleman, who was very popular with the nobles. It seems the people were not disposed to trust these two; they rose in tumult when the new emperors tried to go to the capitol, and would not disperse till Maximus and Balbinus agreed to appoint as their heir a grandson of Gordian the First, a lad of thirteen.

During all these ups and downs the guards—

strange to say—had remained pretty quiet. But after it was all settled, they began to think they must have a finger in the pie. Some of them impudently thrust themselves into the Senate-house, while the Senate was sitting. A Senator, crying that they were spies, rushed at the soldiers and stabbed two of them. The others ran to the barracks and called their comrades to arms.

The Senator who had shown himself so superior to the guards by stabbing the intruders, went to the people and harangued them violently, calling on them to root out these pestilent soldiers. Nothing loth, a vast multitude took up arms, and rushed furiously to the guards' barracks to tear them down. So the war began now in earnest.

The guards, shut up in their barracks, fought desperately, and drove the people back. Then the people cut off the water-pipes which led to the barracks, and reduced the guards to cruel straits. They, choosing their time, sallied forth in a strong party, drove back the people opposed to them, forced their way into the city, and set it on fire in several places. Then all was confusion. Some thought of nothing but putting out the fire; others of plundering; a few of fighting it out then and there.

Of the two emperors, Maximus was away in the country at the head of an army looking out for Maximin. Balbinus was in the palace, amusing himself by sending out elegant proclamations in very graceful language, pointing out the beauty of peace and concord, while Rome was burning, and the soldiers were cutting the people's throats.

In the midst of the uproar a tall man rushed into the street with a fair boy on his shoulders. The boy was young Gordian ; and in the clash and clang of arms, and in the hissing and roaring of the fire, his young voice was raised, commanding the soldiers and people to cease fighting. Wonderful to say, he was obeyed. Both parties, I dare say, had enough by this time ; they laid down their arms and put out the fire, though not till a whole ward had been consumed.

All this while Maximin was marching on toward Rome. Not so quickly as he would have liked, for his army was discontented and reluctant to follow him. But he got them across the Alps at last, and laid siege to Aquileia, at the head of the Gulf. He expected to take it at once ; but the Aquileians hated him as fiercely as the other Romans, and defended their walls with energy and courage. They poured boiling oil and rosin on the soldiers when they advanced to the attack, and drove them back time after time.

These defeats so enraged Maximin that he went about roaring and bellowing that his men were cowards, and deserved death. The men had only been waiting for some excuse to get rid of him. This answered their purpose ; a few of them consulted together, went to his tent, and quietly put him to death with his son. Then they sent word to Aquileia that they acknowledged the new emperors ; and so, once more, Italy had a little peace, and the Emperor Maximus, who had taken very little part in the war, returned to Rome in triumph.

Now he thought there was a chance for a little quiet. But he forgot the guards. These vermin no sooner saw Maximus and Balbinus peaceably settled at Rome than they began to stir. They demanded money; the emperors had none to give them. Then they growled that the Senate had no business to choose emperors; that was the proper privilege of the guards.

If Maximus and Balbinus had been men of sense, with the help of the people they might have mastered the guards. But instead of combining against them they spent their time in quarreling with each other, and abusing each other.

So when the guards rose in their old way, and Maximus sent in haste for a legion of Germans who were in the city to put them down, Balbinus was so absurd as to prevent their obeying the order. He thought to save himself and sacrifice his partner. But the end of the business was, that the guards seized him and Maximus too, tortured them savagely, and put them to death.

There was some talk after this of setting up an officer of the guards to be emperor. But in the end the soldiers agreed to be content with young Gordian, who was not fourteen yet, and under whom they counted to have their own way.

They did have it for a year or two; and Rome was in a shocking state, the boy-emperor (another boy-emperor!) being in the hands of nurses and servants, and there being no law or authority anywhere. But, by good luck, young Gordian fell in love with the daughter of his teacher of rhetoric,

married her, and raised her father to be his chief counselor.

This teacher, whose name was **MYSTHEUS**, was an exceedingly able and vigorous man. He set Rome to rights, curbed the guards, and ruled the empire justly and well.

We know very little about the reign of Gordian the Third, as most of the books in which it was written are lost.

But it seems certain that **SAPOR**, the son of **Artaxerxes**, and King of Persia, raised an army and invaded the Roman dominions in Asia. That young Gordian, with his keeper **Mysitheus**, led an army against Sapor, and drove him back into his own country. That during the campaign **Mysitheus** fell ill, and died—some said from poison. That one **PHILIP**, an Arab, and a robber by trade, contrived to get his place; and shortly afterward murdered Gordian, and persuaded the soldiers to choose him emperor in his stead.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

PHILIP.—DECIUS.—GALLUS.—ÆMILIAN.

AFTER the robber Philip had had young Gordian murdered, he wrote to the Senators at Rome to say that the poor young emperor had unhappily died—he was very sorry to tell them—and that he had been chosen emperor in his stead, and would they be good enough to acknowledge him without loss of time? Having done this, he made ready to go to Rome. On the way he passed through Antioch.

There is a story that Philip was more than half inclined to be a Christian; and that when he arrived at Antioch, where there was a large body of Christians, he took a fancy to go to the church and join in the public worship which was then being celebrated in commemoration of Easter. That the Bishop of Antioch, whose name was BABYLAS, a fearless old man, refused to admit Philip to the church till he had atoned for the death of Gordian. And that Philip, struck by the force of the bishop's words, and touched by remorse, did penance for his crime, and was regularly forgiven by the bishop. I do not vouch for the truth of the story, though many persons believed it.

At all events, he was not so much of a Christian but that, when he got back to Rome, he ordered the famous secular games to be celebrated. These games,

which were among the most brilliant of the Roman festivals, were only celebrated once in every hundred years. One or two of the emperors had kept them out of season ; but the rule was, that they could only be held once in a century : and when they began, the criers went all through Italy, calling upon people to go and see games which no one then living had ever seen before, and which could never be seen again.

It was now, learned Romans reckoned, one thousand years since the foundation of the city of Rome, and the games were celebrated with unusual splendor. They lasted three days. On the evening of the first day the Emperor went down to the bank of the Tiber, followed by a vast crowd of people bearing torches : there he sacrificed three lambs to the Fates. Then the holiday began. All over Rome bonfires were lit, and torchlight processions rambled through the streets. At daybreak, games began ; racing, wrestling, boxing, chariot-driving, and so on ; with plenty of wild beast hunting and gladiator fighting. This lasted till the third day. On that third day, seven-and-twenty beautiful girls, and seven-and-twenty tall boys, whose parents were living, sang hymns in public, praying that the gods would bless the empire during the hundred years that were to roll over before the secular games were seen again.

Most of the Romans believed the story of Romulus and Remus which I have told you. You may fancy with what emotion they must have thought of that humble beginning of Rome, when they looked

around them and saw the vast empire which had grown out of the village on the seven hills. Oh! if they could but have seen what the next hundred years were to bring forth!

There was no peace any where, even now. In every corner of the empire the armies would, from time to time, rise in rebellion, proclaim their general emperor, and make war on Rome. Sometimes the reigning emperor was strong enough to put them down; just as often they were the stronger, and new revolutions took place.

One of these risings of the soldiers now took place on the Danube. At the news Philip lost heart, and went to the Senate in very low spirits, saying that he saw very plainly that his end was near. A brave Senator, named DECIUS, rose and cried, that for his part he had not begun to despair yet.

Philip, cheered by his bold words, asked him would he take the command against the rebels? Decius consenting, he marched away toward the Danube with an army. When he met the rebels, however, his men joined them, and all together cried for Decius to lead them and become emperor. They say he was slow to agree to their proposal; but his scruples were got over in the end, and instead of putting down the rebellion, he turned about with the rebels.

Philip made a feeble struggle to defend his throne. He gathered a few of the guards and some of the country-people, and gave battle to Decius near Verona; but he was beaten and killed. He had only reigned some five years.

Decius was then acknowledged by every body. He was a good man, and a brave one ; but he only reigned a couple of years, and is best remembered by the great invasion of the Goths which took place in his reign.

These GOTHs were a huge, wild race of men, who had come, it was said, from Sweden and Norway. They were brave, like most savages, and very fond of fighting. Like our American Indians, they preferred war and plunder to work ; seldom tilled the land, but trusted for a livelihood to the milk and flesh of their herds and the booty they could wrest from their neighbors.

Many years before Decius became emperor the Goths crossed the Baltic, and swarmed into the countries we call Prussia and Poland. From thence they spread as far as the Black Sea, hovering, like kites, on the borders of the Roman empire. But they were soon tired of living in these cold regions, and robbing the poor races which inhabited them.

Of a sudden they poured into the Roman provinces south of the Danube, ravaging, plundering, and laying waste the country far and wide. To get rid of them, the people of the provinces paid them a large sum of money, with which they went away. This was during the reign of Philip.

Decius was hardly settled on the throne when the news reached him that the Goths had poured down again on the Roman provinces. An imploring cry for help came from the Romans who were settled there. In all haste Decius gathered his best troops and marched away into the country we call Hunga-

ry, to fight the Goths. He had hoped to find them there; but they moved so rapidly that they gave him the slip, fell suddenly on the large city of Philippopolis, in Thrace, and took it. The citizens had defended themselves bravely: out of revenge the savage Goths sacked the place, and slaughtered a hundred thousand people.

When they tried to return home, however, with their prisoners and their booty, they found that Decius had cut off their escape, and was waiting for them with an army which far outnumbered theirs. The king of the Goths offered to give up his plunder if Decius would let them pass. But the stern Roman replied, No; they were robbers, and should find no mercy.

Driven into a marsh, the Goths were furiously attacked by the Romans. At the first onslaught the son of Decius, a promising youth, was struck by an arrow and killed. His father, seeing the troops waver, shouted, "On, soldiers, on! 'tis but a man lost." They rushed to the attack, and drove the Goths deeper and deeper into the marsh. Elated by their success, the Romans pressed close upon the enemy, until, after a time, the whole army found itself entangled in the marsh. Then the Goths turned upon them. They were stronger of body than the Romans, and used to fighting on uneven ground. Decius tried in vain to retreat to the plain. In a few minutes the Goths surrounded him, and he and all his army were cut off.

This was the first of the blows which crushed the Roman Empire.

Men sorrowed sorely over the good Emperor Decius when the news reached Rome ; even the guards were awed into quiet. They let the Senate choose an emperor without murmur. The man chosen was TREBONIANUS GALLUS, and a very bad choice he was. As his colleague the Senate appointed HOSTILIANUS, a son of Decius.

The first thing Gallus did was to buy peace from the Goths, and agree to pay them a yearly tribute on condition of their promising not to molest the Roman dominions in future. It was something new for the Romans to pay tribute—they who had levied tribute on every nation with which they had dealt : and throughout the empire a cry of rage and shame arose at the news. In olden time, I think, the Senate would have made short work of Gallus ; but their spirit was gone now.

Close on the heels of the Goths came the plague once more, marking its path from Asia to Rome with mounds of corpses for milestones, and turning great cities into grave-yards. Rome suffered as severely as usual. In the midst of the cruel distress, fierce quarrels broke out between the Christians and the old Romans about religion ; each accusing the other of being the cause of the plague, and arguing and quarreling to the very jaws of the grave.

Then back came the Goths again, with angry faces and open hands. This time the Roman general on the Danube happened to be a man of nerve ; his name was ÆMILIAN ; and his soldiers fighting bravely, the Gauls were driven across the Danube and into their own woods. The soldiers were so over-

joyed at their victory, and so proud of their general, that they revolted, and chose Æmilian emperor.

Coward Gallus, who had done nothing all his reign but eat, and drink, and sleep, and take medicine to keep off the plague, was in a terrible fright when he heard of the rebellion; and as he knew the soldiers and people of Rome would not fight for him, he sent his best general, VALERIAN, into Gaul, to fetch some legions from thence. Away went Valerian; but while he was gone, Æmilian came racing over the Alps into Italy, and Gallus, having foolishly trusted himself in the Roman camp at Spoleto, in the hope of rousing the troops to defend him, was killed by his own men.

Then Æmilian became emperor, and, in his joy and pride, began to coin medals in which he was called Mars the Avenger, and other grand names. It was a short flicker, his reign, though. He was still at Spoleto when Valerian arrived from Gaul with the legions Gallus had sent for. Full of indignation at the death of his master, he led his legions against Æmilian, and there would have been a battle, but that the soldiers, who cared for no one, and who had no notion of fighting to please Æmilian, went to his tent, killed him, and marched out and acknowledged Valerian emperor.

CHAPTER LXIX.

VALERIAN.—GALLIENUS.

WHEN people at Rome heard that the army had chosen Valerian emperor, they were overjoyed; for he was a good old man, much respected, and had been the friend of the elder Gordians and the good Emperor Decius. His morals were so pure that, on one occasion, when Decius had talked of reviving the old office of Censor, every one said Valerian was the man to fill it.

Notwithstanding all this, his reign was one of the most calamitous and miserable in Roman history. When he was crowned he admitted his son GALLIENUS to a share of the sovereign power, showing clearly that he loved his son better than his duty, for Gallienus was one of the most debauched and worthless young men in Rome.

Their reign was one endless scene of invasion, revolt, bloodshed, and misery.

From the heart of Germany new tribes, one calling itself the FRANKS, another the ALEMANNI (as some suppose, from the words "All men," there being several tribes united under the name), poured down upon Northern Italy, Gaul, and Spain, sweeping every thing before them.

On the Danube, one body of Goths ravaged the country far and wide as before; while another body,

crossing into the Crimea, took boats there, sailed round the coasts of the Black Sea, plundering every rich city on their way, and came sailing, at last, along to Greece. It they ravaged too ; and finding at Athens a number of queer-looking rolls of paper—which they were told were books—were going to make a bonfire of them, when one of their chiefs stopped them, saying, “So long as the Romans and Greeks read books they will never know how to fight.” So this stupid barbarian saved the libraries.

On the eastern frontier of the empire the proud King of Persia, Sapor, rode over the Roman provinces with his fleet horsemen, and came riding at last to Antioch. The people of that gay city (all except the Christians, I suppose) were at the theatre seeing a pantomime. In the middle of the performance an actress screamed, “I see Persian horsemen coming!” as indeed she did—the theatre being on a hill. It was too late for the people to try to defend themselves. The clattering hoofs of the Persian cavalry were already heard in the streets. Antioch surrendered, and there was the usual amount of killing, and robbing, and burning.

Old Emperor Valerian—who was, I think, somewhat in the condition of the bear attacked by bees—did not know where to strike, or what to defend. He sent Gallienus into Gaul—where that hopeful youth gardened a little, and made love a good deal, and ate prodigiously—then hastened off himself to fight Sapor.

They met on the old battle-ground near the Euphrates, and Valerian was beaten. After the bat-

tle Sapor sent to Valerian, inviting him to an interview to arrange a peace, and Valerian—who was old enough to have known better—accepted the invitation. Sapor no sooner had him in his power than he set him on one of his fast horses, and surrounded him with a troop of his best men, and carried him off a prisoner into Persia.

They say that the old Emperor was treated with brutal cruelty by his savage conqueror; that Sapor would clothe him in the purple worn by the Roman emperors, and drag him about in chains; that he made him kneel at his horse's side, and used his shoulder as a footstool when he mounted on horseback. Finally, that when he died, Sapor had his skin tanned and stuffed, and set up in one of the Persian temples. However all this be, it is certain that Valerian never returned from Persia: he died there in captivity, several years after he had been taken prisoner.

When Gallienus heard of his father's death, he remarked that he knew the Emperor was liable to such mishaps, and went on gardening and cooking, and sporting with fine ladies, and gormandizing as before. Yet if ever there was a time when the Roman emperor needed activity and virtue it was now.

Besides the foreign tribes I have mentioned, who never ceased their ravages for a single year, or spared a single European province of the empire, rebels rose up in every part of the Roman dominions, proclaimed themselves emperors, and made war on the state and on each other. Learned men have counted nineteen separate persons who took the

name of Roman Emperor during the fifteen years previous to Gallienus's death; every one of whom had an army to back him, and fought battles; not one of whom died a natural death.

Gallienus sat in his palace, and looked on quietly while these traitors were tearing the empire to pieces: so he dined regularly and largely, and made his jokes over his wine, he cared very little what happened. Once or twice he had a chance of showing his temper when his generals overcame a rebel; and then he would write orders to "tear, kill, hew to pieces every male" among the insurgents. But he was not often roused to such vigor as this. Gaul, for instance, he allowed to be governed by one of the nineteen self-made emperors during the whole of his reign, and never even tried to disturb him.

I suspect his wife (he had a great many, but I mean his head wife) incited him to commit many of the cruel acts which are laid to his charge. Once a jeweler sold to this empress a set of jewels which he said were genuine, but which were afterward proved to be false. The Empress, in a violent rage, ran to her husband, and begged that the jeweler might be horribly punished. "Oh certainly," said Gallienus, "we will have the fellow thrown to the wild beasts." So the poor jeweler was arrested, and dragged, more dead than alive, into the theatre, and thrown down upon the sand, where he lay panting and quaking, expecting every moment to hear the roar of a lion at his ear, and to feel his claws at his throat. After a moment there was a sudden

cry heard; the doomed man looked up and saw the wild beast's cage open, and—an old hen walked out. The Empress asked indignantly what this meant. "Why," said the Emperor, "the man cheated you, and we have cheated him—that is all!"

It was very well for Rome that, while Gallienus was amusing himself with jokes of this kind in Italy, there was some one in Asia able to make head against the Persian Sapor. After he had taken Valerian, all Asia said he would now be the master of the world; and a noble of the rich city of Palmyra, named ODENATHUS, sent him a string of camels loaded with rich presents.

Sapor was a man of so haughty a temper that he threw the presents into the river, and said that Odenathus must come to him with his hands tied behind his back if he expected to gain his favor.

It fell out that this Odenathus was a man of as much spirit as Sapor himself, and had a wife, the famous ZENOBIA, who was very spirited likewise. Odenathus straightway raised a band of bold Arabs, and when Sapor undertook his next march, fell upon him at night and scattered his army. He followed up the blow by retaking all the Roman cities which Sapor had captured, and in a very short time drove this proud Persian back into his own country.

Odenathus was a fine character. He might have kept his conquests for himself; but he was honest enough to restore them all to Rome, and always to call himself the servant of Gallienus. That worthy was so much astonished at the modesty of Odenathus—when every one else was setting up on his

own account—that he sent him the title of Roman Emperor.

It was an empty honor, and he did not enjoy it long. Happening to quarrel with his nephew, he sent the lad to prison. When he set him at liberty, the young man, whose Arab blood boiled for vengeance, laid a plot against Odenathus, and stabbed him at his dinner-table—as some said, with the help of Zenobia. We shall see presently what came of the foul deed.

Gallienus by this time was thoroughly detested and despised by every one. A conspiracy was set on foot to deal with him after the old plan. A brave general, CLAUDIUS, and several soldiers were at the head of it. Gallienus was at the siege of Milan at the time, having contrived to lock up one of the nineteen rebels there. The conspirators chose a moment when he was in his tent to set up a cry, “The enemy are upon us!” The Emperor rushed from his tent, leaped on his horse, and shouted, “Where are they?” riding toward the walls. But he had not gone far when one of the conspirators hurled a dart at him from behind, which passed through his back and killed him.

Shameful as the murder was, the empire was well rid of him; the better, as he made room for a few respectable emperors.

CHAPTER LXX.

CLAUDIUS II.—AURELIAN.

GALLIENUS dead, the soldiers cried, with one voice, that CLAUDIUS should be emperor, and he was greeted with the title. AUREOLUS, the sham emperor whom Gallienus was besieging at Milan, proposed to Claudius to share the empire with him; at which Claudius flew into a great rage, called Aureolus all sorts of hard names, and, finally, had him put to death.

The old writers make out Claudius to have been an excellent emperor, and I hope he was. I am sorry that he gained the crown by helping to kill Gallienus, and that he lied about it afterward, and pretended to be indignant at the murder. However, there is no doubt Gallienus was better in his grave than out of it; and as for Claudius, blood-stained as his hands were, they lay heavy on the enemies of Rome.

This book would not contain even a short sketch of these enemies. They were every where, swarming like grasshoppers. On the north, on the south, on the east, on the west, by sea, by land, out of the woods, from down the mountains, from up the valleys, from over the plains, from across the deserts, horsemen, and spearmen, and archers, and axemen, came to worry Rome.

On the shore of the Black Sea, not very far from the place where the proud city of Odessa now stands, three hundred and twenty thousand rough Goths embarked on a voyage in quest of plunder. Some of them were shipwrecked on the way; but enough—and too many—drifted through the Hellespont into the Mediterranean, and came tossing and rolling up against the Grecian coast. There they landed and laid siege to Thessalonica.

They were there, watching for the moment to rush into the city and sack it, when up marched Claudius at the head of a great army. Then a great battle was fought, and the Goths were beaten. They tried to make their way back into the wilderness. Forming a great circle round their plunder and their women, they retreated with wonderful speed. Not so quickly, though, but that Claudius came up with them, and broke through the circle, and scattered them again.

The broken remnant begged for peace. But Claudius said they should have no peace. He chased them with his swift horsemen high up into the mountains of Thrace and Macedon; and there the last of this great Gothic army perished miserably of disease and hunger.

They were famishing away when their ships, which had been doing a little private robbing on the sea-coast, sailed back to the landing-place for them. Claudius was on the watch: when they moored, he attacked them and sunk them all.

In honor of this great victory the Emperor took the name of Claudius the Goth, and the Romans

were delighted that they had at last an emperor who could defend them. But in the midst of their joy and his glory Claudius took the plague, and died, having reigned nearly three years.

On his death-bed he chose one of his generals, a brave and vigorous man, named AURELIAN, to succeed him.

Claudius had a brother, named QUINTILLUS, who fancied that he ought to succeed his brother, and persuaded the Senate to elect him. But Aurelian marching Romeward, Quintillus soon took fright, and committed suicide, by opening his veins, seventeen days after his election.

Aurelian hastened to Rome, but spent a very short time there. He was burning to fight with some of the savage tribes which were prowling round the border provinces. Low as Rome had sunk, she had an army still; and Aurelian was perhaps as great a soldier as she had ever produced. He was brave as a lion, and his strength was such that in one battle he clove forty-eight savages to the earth with his own hand. The soldiers used to sing a song about him, of which the chorus was, "He killed his thousand, his thousand, his thousand." He was a wise leader too. He would allow none of his soldiers to plunder the peasants; and one fellow, who had brutally insulted a farmer's wife, he punished by tying his limbs to the bent branches of trees, which, when the cords which bent them were loosed, tore the unhappy wretch in pieces.

For all his bravery and his skill, however, he could only win battles; he could not conquer the

wild northmen. When he met them, he beat them ; but where he killed one, ten arose in his place ; when he thought they were in front of him, they turned up behind him ; a week after a great victory he found he had won nothing—every crag, forest, and mountain crawled with enemies.

In his despair Aurelian sent to Rome to bid the Senate consult the Sibylline Books, to see if there could be any thing found there to suit the uncommonly hard task he had before him. The Books said that such and such offerings were to be made to the gods, so many maidens and so many youths were to sing songs, and that the priests were to march in procession in white robes. All these things were done, but made no sort of difference. On the contrary, directly afterward, troubles broke out at Rome. Plots were got up among the guards and the nobles, and the old disturbances were revived.

Happily for Aurelian, a lull took place in the border wars. He took advantage of it, and hurried off to Rome. When he found the state things were in he set matters to rights with a vengeance. The chief disturbers of the peace he put to death without the least ceremony—many Senators and officers of the guards among the number. He let the people know that he would not be trifled with ; that he was not a man to let a few lives stand in his way. And though he was much abused for it, and was called a cruel, inhuman monster, even long after his death, I notice that Rome was very quiet for some time afterward.

As soon as this business was settled he was off

to the East. A new enemy had risen up there. This was ZENOBLA, the Queen of Palmyra, one of the greatest women in history. Though she was very beautiful, with the loveliest eyes, and soft, dark complexion, and pearly teeth, she was not effeminate or fond of pleasure. Her time she spent in drilling her troops and hunting; she lived as plainly and fared as hardly as any soldier; and in her leisure moments read and studied the Greek and Roman authors. Her ambition was to be queen of the East. She overran Egypt, dashed into Asia Minor, and took several provinces; and, for a time, it seemed as though she would really gain her ends.

Aurelian landed in Asia Minor, and fought his way to the city of Tyana. There Zenobia had left a strong garrison, which defended the city obstinately. Aurelian was so enraged at the courage of the enemy that he swore, when he got into the place, he would not leave a dog alive. He did get in, by dint of hard fighting, and the first order he gave was to spare the inhabitants. The soldiers rushed to him angrily, and reminding him of his oath, asked leave to butcher the people; but he dryly answered that he had spoken of dogs, not men, and they were quite at liberty to kill all the dogs they could find.

Then he hastened to fight Zenobia. Two battles were fought, both of which Aurelian won—one near Emesa, the other near Antioch. They say that Zenobia made all her men wear heavy coats of iron mail, which arrows could not pierce, and which turned the edge of swords; but that Aurelian managed to get the better of these mail-clad warriors

by arming a legion with iron clubs, with which they battered the Palmyreans to the earth, coats of mail and all.

Queen Zenobia, after her last defeat, fled home to Palmyra. Aurelian gave chase, and besieged her there. Palmyra is now a miserable little village, counting some thirty or forty mud huts, tenanted by wretched, starving beggars. Then it was a great walled city, overspread with noble palms, and standing in the middle of a lovely island of verdure, in the heart of a desert. It was peopled with Arabs, Persians, and Saracens, who loved their queen and their home, and fought gallantly.

Aurelian said that in all his wars he had never had a tougher task than the siege of this city. He sent to Zenobia to summon her to surrender. She answered that she would fight to the last. He marched his men to the walls. She drove them quickly back with showers of darts and stones. They tried other places; but wherever they advanced the showers fell as thick as ever.

Then Aurelian gave up the idea of storming the place. He girt it round with intrenchments, and waited patiently till the provisions of the garrison were exhausted. This plan succeeded. After great suffering, Zenobia opened a gate at night, mounted a swift dromedary, and fled through the Roman lines.

She was caught by a party of horse sent after her, and Aurelian took her a prisoner into the city with him. They say that he asked her what made her rebel against the empire. And that she an-

swered that it was a disgrace to obey such emperors as Gallienus; that she would yield to *him* who knew how to conquer. Whether she made this clever speech and thereby tickled Aurelian's vanity, or not, it seems that she threw all the blame or the glory of the war on her counselors, who were seized and executed by Aurelian.

He spared Palmyra. But soon after he had left it to return home, the old Saracen spirit arose again. The people rebelled, and killed the Roman garrison Aurelian had stationed there. He was far away when this happened; but the moment he heard of it, he turned about, raced across the country to Palmyra, took it, and sacked it. For three days it was plundered and partly burned. It never recovered from the shock.

Another rebellion broke out in Egypt about the same time. It seems that it was headed by a paper-maker named FIRMUS. He had far better have stuck to his trade; for Aurelian was down upon him in a twinkling, cut his army to pieces, and put him to death in dreadful torments.

This quieted the whole of the East, and Aurelian, as active as usual, took ship and returned to Gaul. There was a sham emperor there too, named TERRICUS, who had been set up by the troops, and who, they say, was not sorry at all when Aurelian marched up to Chalons, where he was, gave him battle, defeated him, and relieved him of the trouble of reigning.

The Goths, Franks, and other wild tribes being quiet at the time, Aurelian was able to return to

Rome, and to say that he had put down every rebel, and every enemy in the empire. He had a grand triumph on the occasion, at which so many captives of various nations were shown about that the Emperor had to make each set carry a sign-board, on which was written the name of their nation; and Tetricus, and Zenobia, tottering under the weight of jewelry and gold, and ever so many other sham sovereigns and genuine sovereigns walked behind the Emperor's chariot.

To make an end of Zenobia, I will say here that Aurelian gave her a house to live in near Rome, and helped marry her daughters to Roman nobles; and that she spent the last years of her life peacefully, though her heart must have yearned, I think, at times, for a look at her own distant city of Palms.

Aurelian made himself a great favorite with the people by giving them presents. He gave them not only food and money, as other emperors had done, but also clothes. From which we learn that he was a better soldier than statesman.

One good thing he did, however; he rebuilt the walls of Rome, which had fallen into decay (they had not been wanted since that day, long, long ago, when Hannibal jerked his javelin over them), and were, besides, so small, that the city had outgrown them. The writers of the day said that Aurelian's wall was fifty miles long; but this was probably a fine flourish to gratify the pride of the Romans. It seems that the real length of the wall was twenty-one miles; so that the extent of Rome was about

equal to what that of New York will be when the city is built up to 125th street.

They say that, when he had built this wall, and every one was praising him for it and for his glorious victories, he grew proud and extravagant; that he wore a crown, a thing the Roman emperors had never done; that he lived profusely, and kept up a costly court. These stories, however, you must remember, come from the nobles, upon whom Aurelian was particularly, and, I dare say, justly hard.

He had not reigned five years (though he had done so much) when he went the way of all Roman emperors. A secretary of his, named MNES-
THEUS, whom he had threatened to punish for some offense, concocted a plot against him with the officers of the army. They chose their opportunity when he was marching to the East once more, and murdered him.

The soldiers rose in fury at the deed, cast Mnes-theus to the wild beasts, and put the murderers to death. But they could not recall Aurelian to life again, or find another like him.

CHAPTER LXXI.

TACITUS.—PROBUS.—CARUS AND HIS SONS.

WHEN the news of Aurelian's death reached Rome, a very strange dispute arose between the Senate and the guards. A new emperor was wanted, and the guards sent to ask, would the Senate be good enough to choose one? The Senate, not to be outdone in civility, answered that it could not think of such a thing; it was for the army to say whom it would like best. By no means, rejoined the soldiers, you must choose. And the Senate still answered, No, that was the business of the soldiers.

This uncommonly original quarrel lasted, they say, eight months. The Senate was afraid of the army, and the army had not yet got over the wholesome effect of Aurelian's severity, and was disposed to be modest and self-denying. It was not till the news arrived at Rome that the Goths were pouring down upon the provinces again that the Senate resolved to act, and chose an old Senator, named TACITUS, to be emperor.

He was a very old man, being seventy-five at the time; and enjoyed so good a character, and was so rich, that he had foreseen that he might be chosen, and had gone away to the country in order to avoid so useless an honor. On his return, he was greeted with the title of emperor. He tried to be excused;

but neither the Senate nor the army would hear of excuses, and he became emperor.

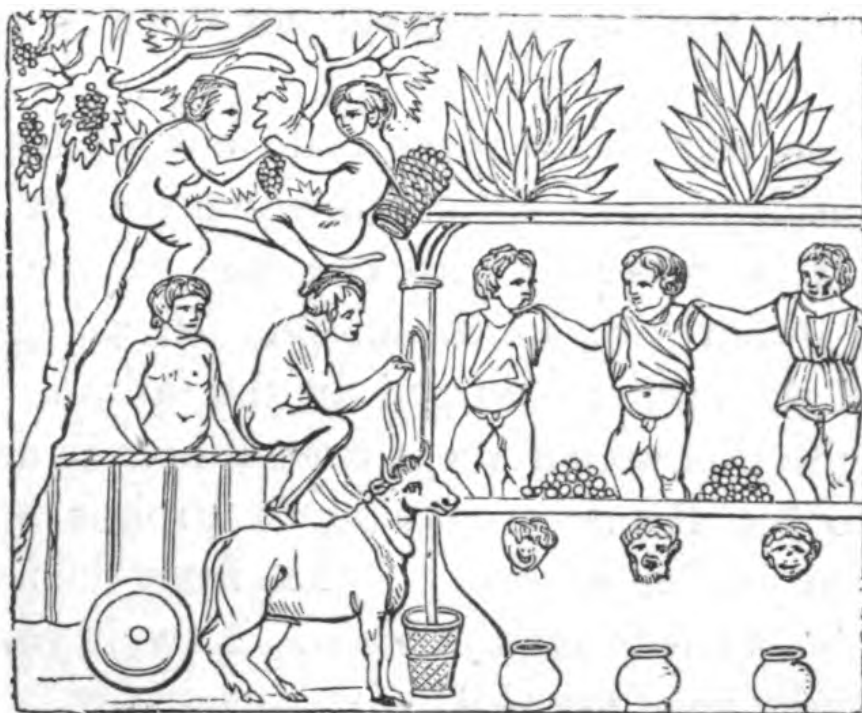
He reigned nearly seven months, during which he restored to the Senate many rights of which former emperors had deprived it; made war, too, on the enemies of Rome in Asia Minor, and won some victories.

He was in Asia Minor still when he was attacked by the old imperial disease. A relation of his irritated the soldiers by harsh treatment; they rose against him, killed him, and killed the Emperor as well, when they were at it.

Then the murderers proclaimed the Emperor's brother, FLORIAN. But another part of the Roman army preferred an officer of their own, named PROBUS; he marched against Florian, defeated and killed him, and began to reign.

He reigned nearly six years and gained great fame by his victories in war and his wisdom in peace. He is one of the best of the Roman emperors.

Gaul was overrun by the wild tribes I have mentioned when he came to the throne. He drove them out, after a great deal of hard fighting, and for a time secured peace for that part of the empire. To prevent their returning, he raised large bodies of militia among the people of Gaul, trained them to fight, and placed them on the frontiers which were likely to be the next attacked. To improve the condition of the Gauls, he repealed that hard law of Domitian's which forbade them to plant vines. This was a great help to the Gauls; they planted vines on all the sunny hills of Burgundy and Champagne



A ROMAN WINE-PRESS.

(these names, of course, were not used till long afterward), and began to make those delicious wines which have been famous for more than a thousand years.

The Northmen learned to fear Probus. Some of the bravest and toughest he drove into the woods, and set a price on their heads. All the young Gauls chased them, and hunted them down for the reward, and thus they were soon destroyed.

Then away to Asia Minor, where he dealt in like manner with the hosts of savage races and robbers who had risen up there. One of these bands of robbers, who were called Isaurians, gave him a great deal of trouble. Their chief, LYCIUS, was a bold and skillful soldier; he led Probus a long race over crags, and valleys, and rivers, till the Romans were almost wearied out. At last, Probus shut him up in a fort or small town, and laid siege to the place. Lycius defended it with wonderful address, and for

a long time the Romans could not force their way inside.

But one day this Lycius bade one of his most skillful archers shoot a Roman whom he saw in the plain. The archer bent his bow and let the arrow fly, but it fell wide of the mark. In a rage, Lycius had the archer scourged for the failure. That very night this archer crept over the wall and deserted to the Romans. Going to Probus he said, "See you yonder window? It is from thence that Lycius looks out to see the plain. Now, if you will, I will make good my skill with this arrow."

Probus bade him shoot boldly, and offered him great rewards if, as he said, he could hit Lycius. The arrow sped: it was better aimed than the last; it struck Lycius in the breast and killed him. Then the town surrendered.

Probus got great glory from these victories, and the Romans were very fond of him. Still, in various parts of the empire rebels would rise, as usual; and his time was always occupied in putting them down. One of these rebels, who was called BONOSUS, was of the same race as our ancestors—he was a Briton. I am sorry to say that he is not a countryman to be proud of. He had one merit; he could drink so hugely that it was said he was born for the purpose. I dare say he had been drinking too freely when Probus met him and defeated him; for he ran away from the field of battle and went home and drank a few bottles, then hanged himself. The people, when they found him, said it was not a human body but a wine-sack that was hung by the neck.

Probus knew the soldiers too well to let them be idle. When there was no war on hand he made them work at digging canals or building bridges. This did not please them, as you may imagine. He knew it, and built himself a high and strong tower to fly to in case of revolt. But it did not help him much. One day, while he was overlooking the digging of a canal near the River Danube, the men rose and attacked him. He fled to his strong tower, but the rebels overtook him at the very door, and killed him. He was only fifty at the time, and might have been a blessing to the empire for many years to come.

The soldiers then chose one of their officers, whose name was CARUS, to be emperor, and sent word to the Senate. They had very soon got over the notion that the Senate ought to choose the emperors.

Of Carus we know very little indeed. He was born in Gaul, of Roman family; reigned sixteen months; made war upon the Germans and the Persians with great success.

There is a story that, after one of his victories in Asia, the Persian king sent ambassadors to him to treat for peace. The ambassadors, who were used to great splendor at home, were quite surprised to find the Roman emperor sitting on the grass, very shabbily dressed, and eating his dinner of pork and peas like any common soldier. They were at first in some doubt whether they ought to be respectful to so mean-looking a fellow. But Carus, seeing them, called to them, and said, "Just go to your master, and say to him that if he does not give back

to the Romans all the territory he has taken from them within one month, I will sweep his kingdom as bare as my head." And he took off his cap, and showed the Persians that he had not a hair on his skull.

Soon after this the report spread that in a great storm a flash of lightning had struck the Emperor's tent and killed him. I am afraid there was no thunder to that lightning.

The Senate and the troops agreed to take Carus's two sons, CARINUS and NUMERIAN, for emperors. The former was in Gaul, the latter in Asia. The army was moving, and the soldiers noticed that they never saw Numerian. On inquiring the reason, they were told that the good young man had cried so much at his father's death that his eyes were sore, and could not bear the light. And, in fact, when they watched, they saw that the young Emperor's litter was tightly closed. But after a few days, some one noticed a strange odor about the litter. He ventured to peep under the curtains, and saw Numerian's body already half eaten by worms.

A meeting of the soldiers was held to choose a new emperor. The man chosen was DIOCLETIAN, a famous officer. He was of poor family; but one of those unlucky Druids, who were so abundant in olden times in Britain, had foretold to him that he would come to be emperor if he killed a boar. There were boars enough in the woods to kill, one would fancy, to realize this prophecy without any trouble; but Diocletian decided that they were not the sort of boars meant.

So when the soldiers chose him, he called an officer, whose name was APER, or THE BOAR, and, charging him with being the murderer of Numerian (as perhaps he was), ran him through the body with his sword. He had still to deal with Carinus.

Happily for him Carinus was a shocking character, who tried to copy Domitian and Elagabalus, and was very successful. He had a strong army, and fought several battles, in Southern Germany and on the Danube, with Diocletian; even won the last of them. But he was so detested for his cruelties and debaucheries, that in the hour of victory his soldiers rose against him and put him to death.

Then Diocletian became sole emperor.

CHAPTER LXXII.

DIOCLETIAN.

DIOCLETIAN reigned twenty years, and died in his bed, peaceful and happy. This shows you that he was no common man, and enjoyed no ordinary good luck. More especially as he had hardly been crowned emperor when the wild tribes in Gaul and Germany rose again, rebellions broke out in Egypt and other Eastern provinces, and enemies attacked the Roman empire on all sides.

It was a hard task to stand against so many foes, all strong, fierce, and angry; and Diocletian, who was a very shrewd and thoughtful emperor, resolved that he would get some one to help him. He pitched upon one MAXIMIAN, who was a bold, rough, savage soldier; and to prevent him turning against the Emperor and rebelling, as so many generals had done, Diocletian gave him the title of emperor of his own accord, and set him to watch over the western half of the empire.

Finding afterward that two heads were yet too few for the business, Diocletian chose two more assistants—one of whom was a huge soldier like Maximian, but more fiery and ambitious: his name was GALERIUS; the other, a connection of the Emperor Claudius the Second, a noble-hearted Illyrian gentleman, whose name was FLAVIUS CONSTANTIUS, but

who is best known by that of **CONSTANTIUS THE PALE**, from the livid paleness of his complexion. Always guarding against rebellions, Diocletian made these two divorce their wives, and marry ladies of his family and Maximian's, then he appointed them to be heirs to the imperial throne.

So now Rome had four masters instead of one. The plan answered very well during Diocletian's reign, but it helped greatly to ruin the empire in the end.

Diocletian went to live at Nicomedia, a city near the borders of Asia and Europe; Galerius he sent to the Danube to do the fighting that was required there. Maximian lived for the most part at Milan, in Italy; he sent Constantius into Gaul and Germany.

Constantius had plenty of work with the Northmen and Germany. Year after year they poured down into the Roman provinces. Pale indeed might the Roman general's cheeks grow when he thought where these weary wars would end. After a great many years fighting—in the course of which Constantius had several narrow escapes, and was once only saved by being dragged by ropes over a wall into a fortress—he crushed for a time the nearest and most troublesome tribes. But they took to the sea and baffled him again.

The best Roman commodore of the day—**CARAUSIUS**—was sent after them. But he did them little harm, and it was soon discovered that he had a private understanding with them, and shared their plunder. Maximian burst into a fury when the

bargain came to his ears, and sent orders to have Carausius put to death directly. But the keen sailor got wind of what was coming, landed in Britain, set himself up as emperor, and for several years defied the Romans.

He was killed at last by his soldiers, and one of the murderers took his place. Then Constantius resolved to make an effort to reconquer the island. He crossed over in boats in stormy weather to the Isle of Wight; and the rebels, who could not conceive it possible that any one would put to sea in a gale, so little did they know of navigation, were caught by surprise and overcome.

Meanwhile, Diocletian and Galerius were busy in the East. There had been another revolt in Egypt—they were a very restless, unsatisfied people, these Egyptians—and Diocletian was obliged to punish them very severely. Among other punishments, he seized all the books which the priests had written on the subject of chemistry and burned them. Chemistry was studied by these priests, not as we study it now, but in the foolish hope of finding the way to make gold; and Diocletian naturally fancied that it was the hope of finding this secret which encouraged the Egyptians to be so turbulent. It is a great pity, of course, that books should ever be destroyed; but really, when I think of the fine lives that have been wasted, and the mischief that has been wrought by persons seeking this same secret for the manufacture of gold, I do not feel angry that Diocletian did his best to put a stop to it in Egypt.

To the wars with the Persians Diocletian sent

Galerius, though his proper post was on the Danube. Galerius was a rash, headstrong leader; and after a dashing campaign, he contrived to get thoroughly beaten by the Persians. Diocletian was so angry when he returned, that he made Galerius, who was proud and fat, run by the side of his chariot near a mile.

A short while afterward, Diocletian sent him out again to fight the Persians; and this time Galerius showed that he had learned caution. He fought several battles, and so totally defeated the Persians that their king, NARSES, lost all his wives and children, who fell into the hands of the Romans. It is very pleasant to find that Galerius—who was not much given to that sort of thing—treated them well, and protected them from the soldiers.

These wars—which it would be tedious to describe at length—lasted during the whole of Diocletian's reign. As the Romans were the conquerors in the end, the two emperors had a grand triumph at Rome in honor of their victories. Diocletian traveled all the way from Nicomedia to be present at it; but as it cost an immense sum to keep up the two emperors and their two heirs, and the great armies they had always on foot, he would not allow the games to be celebrated at great expense, and thus offended the idle Romans mortally. They would have had far greater and juster cause of sorrow if they could have foreseen that this was the last great triumph that would ever be celebrated at Rome.

Diocletian was hurt by the sneering way in which the people mentioned his games. He left Rome in

the depth of winter to go back to his favorite Nicomedia. On the way he fell ill, and very nearly died. He recovered slowly, and during his recovery committed the worst act of his life. This was the persecution of the Christians.

They were very numerous now both in Rome and elsewhere, and the people of the old religion, and especially the priests whose trade they spoiled, hated them more bitterly than ever. One day Diocletian had ordered the augurs and priests to offer particular sacrifices in order to find out the future, as these clever people always pretended they could do. This time, from some cause or other, they could neither read the future nor invent a story to please the Emperor; and so, to defend themselves, they said the Christians had bewitched the sacrifices, and that the gods would not reveal any thing so long as the people of this wicked sect were present.

Galerius hated the Christians as much as the priests did; he wrought upon the mind of Diocletian when he was in ill health, and persuaded him to issue a proclamation against the Christians. The proclamation had hardly been stuck up at Nicomedia when a very imprudent and hot-headed Christian tore it down. He was seized directly and griled to death. The churches were burst open, and the Bibles burned; and many bishops and priests were thrust into prison.

A few days after this, the Emperor's palace was set on fire. Galerius said the Christians had done it. It was saved with great trouble; and a few days afterward it was again set on fire. Every one

accused the Christians again; and I dare say that some hot-headed members of the Church may have had a hand in the business. Diocletian left Nicomedia, saying that the Christians kept him in fear of his life; and, by way of revenge, ordered them to be persecuted throughout the empire.

In many places the cruel order was obeyed, and great numbers of Christians perished miserably—though nobly—in torments, praising God, and holding fast to Christ's name. But there were many parts of the empire where the persecution was only a matter of form. Constantius protected the Christians; some members of the Emperor's family were Christians; and in quite a number of provinces the governors took care to contrive a means of escape for the Christians, who were generally the most steady, moral, and useful people of the province.

Very shortly after this shameful act Galerius went to Diocletian and asked him whether he was not growing very old, and would he not like to be relieved of the business of the empire? Diocletian knew what he meant, and proposed that there should be four emperors instead of two, and that Galerius and Constantius should succeed at once.

But Galerius said that wouldn't suit him at all. Diocletian must resign, and leave him master of the empire.

Upon this, Diocletian, whose mind had been a good deal shaken by his illness, burst into tears, and said he would do whatever Galerius wanted. Accordingly, a few days afterward, he drew up his army near Nicomedia, and with Maximian, who

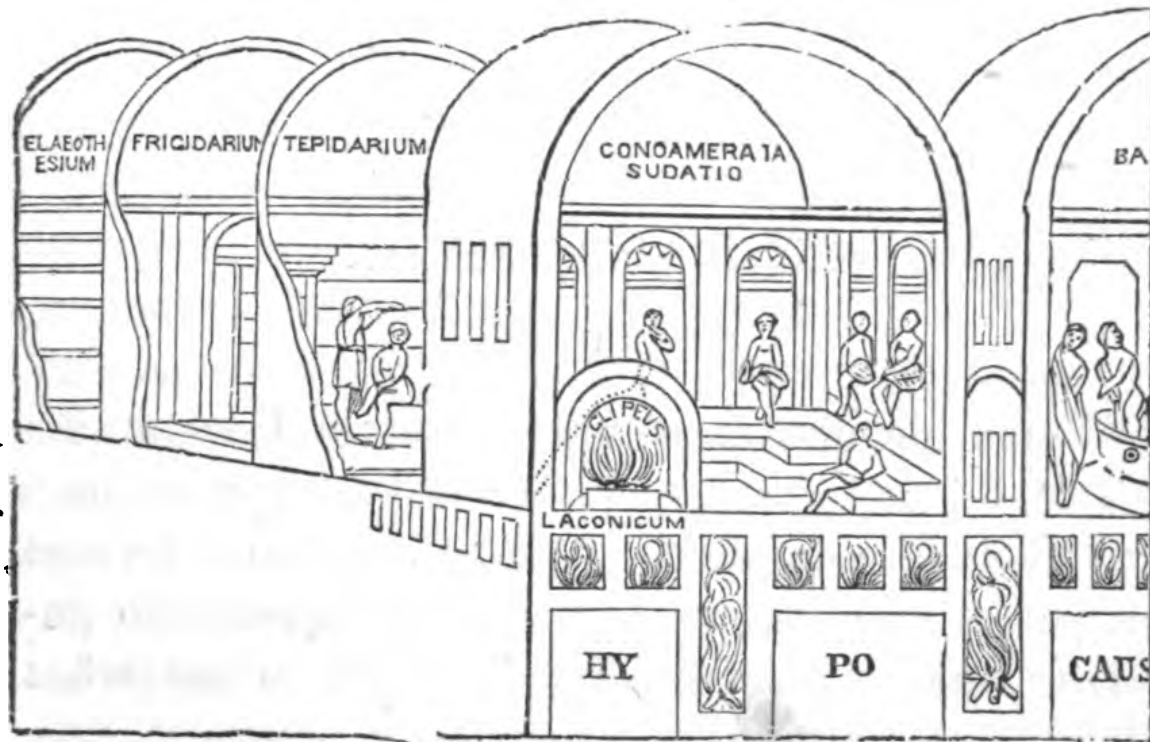
does not seem to have been consulted in the matter, gave up the empire to Galerius and Constantius. It was a strange and affecting sight. Diocletian had reigned longer than any emperor since Antoninus; and the soldiers were so used to hear of their emperors being murdered, that they could hardly believe their eyes when they saw Diocletian take off his purple cloak and put it on the shoulders of Galerius.

The two old emperors went to their private homes, and lived many years afterward. Diocletian, who soon recovered his manliness, built him a fine house in Dalmatia—some of its ruins you may still see near Spalatro—and farmed like an old Roman. Once Maximian, growing tired of private life (as you will hear in the next chapter), went to him and begged him to become emperor again. But the wise old man answered disdainfully, “Would to God you saw the cabbages I am raising; you would never want me to leave them to be emperor!”

Diocletian is best remembered now by the fine baths he built at Rome, part of which are still standing.

Galerius all along intended to keep all the power of the empire for himself. He could not prevent Constantius becoming emperor with him; but he took care to keep his son CONSTANTINE, a fine young man and a great soldier, with him, in a sort of genteel confinement; and appointed two creatures of his own, named SEVERUS and MAXIMIN, to be heirs to the empire.

However, as it happened, his plans all went wrong.



ROMAN BATHS.

Constantine, hearing that his father was on the point of death, escaped and journeyed to Gaul, where he was. Constantius recovered from his illness, and undertook an expedition against the Scots in Britain. He had won a victory over them, and was still prosecuting the war vigorously, when he died at York. His soldiers then assembled, and without taking the least notice of Galerius, chose Constantine emperor.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

CONSTANTINE.

FROM his distant camp in Britain Constantine sent hasty word to Galerius that the soldiers had made him emperor. With the message he sent his portrait, as was usual from one emperor to another: then waited quietly in Gaul to see what Galerius would do.

He did not wait long. Galerius never liked him; he made answer that he would not acknowledge Constantine, having already appointed his own man Severus to be emperor in the room of Constantius the Pale.

It chanced only a short while before, that Galerius and Diocletian had made some sharp laws to keep the guards at Rome in order. These laws were very much needed, as you know; but the guards did not like them any the better for that, and were at this time in no pleasant humor with Galerius, or with any one who was his friend.-

It chanced also that, in all these little family arrangements and parcelings out of the empire, no one had taken the least thought of a son of the old Emperor Maximian, MAXENTIUS by name, a bold, ambitious youth. He was furious at being left out of the imperial party; and finding the guards unquiet, and ready for any mischief, he went to them

privily and asked them would they rise and make him emperor? They liked nothing better; and the Senate and people of Rome caring very little who was emperor, as none of them now seemed to care a straw for Rome, the guards proclaimed Maxentius without the least objection.

The news coming to the ears of old Maximian in his retreat, he took horse in hot speed, rode to Rome, said he would be emperor again, got some one to give him the title, and flourished it in company with his son.

So now there were six emperors—Constantine in Gaul; Severus at Milan; Maximian and his son Maxentius at Rome; Galerius at Nicomedia; and Maximin (who took the title like every body else) in Syria. You shall see how these six killed each other off in a very short space of time, till there was but one left out of the whole party.

The first disposed of was Severus, who, on hearing of the rising at Rome and the election of Maxentius, came blundering down with a few miserable troops, was quickly beaten, and forced to take shelter in a castle at Ravenna. Maxentius asked him if he would come out and talk over their dispute? He, having no sense, said he would, put himself in the power of Maxentius, and was politely asked if he had any choice as to the manner of his death? He answered, that if it had come to that, he would like best to die by opening his veins. Which he did without loss of time.

Galerius, away in the East, flew into a terrible passion when he heard of these doings: bade his

men to horse, and came riding over to Italy to chastise the rebels. But old Maximian was as cool and as cunning as Galerius was fiery and hot-headed. Galerius had never been at Rome, though he had been Roman emperor so long: he did not know how to deal with the people of Italy, and the old fox, Maximian, seduced his soldiers away from him, and reduced him to great straits. After struggling some time, he turned about, and went back to the East dreadfully crest-fallen and sobered. Still, as he would not give up, he picked out a soldier from his army, named LICINIUS, gave him the title of Roman Emperor, and bade him fight it out with the rebels.

Directly after, Maximian and his son quarreled. Maxentius was a vile wretch, who oppressed the Romans horribly, and led a dissolute life. One day, at a review, his old father made a furious speech against him, tore the purple cloak from his shoulders, and called upon the people and the soldiers to drive him out of the country. The people were quite ready to do so; but the guards, who had a natural liking for bad emperors, and to whom Maxentius had made many presents, took his part; through their help Maxentius kept his place, and instead of the son, it was the father who was driven out.

Hereupon this restless and troublesome old man rushed to Diocletian, and besought him to join him in a revolt; when Diocletian talked about his cabages, he hastened off to Galerius; when Galerius said he was tired of war, and was busy building bridges and digging drains, he journeyed away to

Constantine, always repeating the same words, and fuming and storming against his ungrateful son. Constantine had married his daughter, FAUSTA; and Maximian made sure that he, at all events, would help him. But Constantine said he had enough work at present with the Franks.

Then this terrible old man—who had no one else to go to for help—resolved to kill Constantine, and put himself in his place. The plot was discovered, and Constantine gave orders to seize his father-in-law. The old man fled as actively as ever to Marseilles, and shut himself up there; but Constantine battered a breach in the wall in double-quick time, caught Maximian, put him to death, and buried him with great honors. He was at rest at last, it seemed; though, if all I read be true, his body was dug up seven hundred years afterward, and made almost as much noise at Marseilles as it had done when it was alive.

The next of the imperial party to die was Galerius, who, after his misfortunes in Gaul, improved greatly, and became quite a respectable emperor. He ordered the persecution of the Christians to cease; ruled justly; and did much for the part of the empire in which he lived. He died at last of a loathsome disease, which the more bitter among the Christians said was a judgment upon him for his cruelties to them.

The next turn in affairs was a quarrel between Maxentius and Constantine. The people of Italy, groaning under the weight of Maxentius's tyranny, had long wished Constantine to cross over to their relief; but he—being a cautious, wise man—paid

no heed to their messages till Maxentius openly insulted and threatened him.

Then Constantine rose. Rose with all his might, and came rushing over the Alps like a hurricane, at the head of his best Gaulish horsemen, and his stoutest Briton legions. At Turin there was a stand made by the troops of Maxentius: he had a troop of horsemen there all clad in glittering steel; but Constantine rode round them and through them and over them, and before nightfall scattered them far and wide. Then to Verona, where there was another bloody fight, which Constantine also won; and then to Rome.

At Rome lay Maxentius with far more men than Constantine could muster; but he had so little skill that he posted them with their backs to the river, close on the bank. So it fell out that when the first charge was made by Constantine's horsemen, the Romans tried to retreat and fell into the Tiber; and the confusion spreading, horse and foot took to their heels and ran. Ran till they came to a bridge across the Tiber, over which they rushed in so tumultuous a throng that the bridge broke under them, and thousands—Maxentius among them—fell into the water and were drowned.

There is a very well-known story about Constantine's becoming a Christian on his way to Rome, in consequence of a wonderful vision he saw. He said that while he was journeying through Gaul, he was much troubled in his mind about religion, not knowing whether the old religion or the Christian was the true one; that, one day, while he was turning

the matter over in his mind, he saw a great cross in the sky overhead, and under it in Greek the words "Conquer under this standard;" that he did not know what to make of the cross or the words, and was greatly troubled by them; but that at night, as he lay in a deep sleep, the SAVIOUR appeared to him in a dream, told him that the cross was the Christian standard, and commanded him to become a Christian.

This is the story which Constantine told to his friend the Christian bishop, EUSEBIUS. The bishop believed it, as did most of the Christians of that day; and they grew much attached to Constantine in consequence. I am afraid, notwithstanding, that it is not true; that Constantine never saw any cross in the sky, and never became a Christian till he was on the point of death.

He told the Christians that he believed in Christ, but he told the old Romans that he believed in Jupiter; he gave money to build Christian churches, but he liked temples too; he talked of making Christianity the state religion, but he became high-priest of the old gods; he read the gospels, but offered sacrifices to Apollo; he filled his house with Christian teachers, but gave to one of the days of the week the name of SUNDAY, in honor of the Syrian sun-god. You may perhaps infer from these strange practices that Constantine was uncertain all his life which of the known religions was the true one, and wanted to be on the safe side by belonging to them all.

Still, it is certain that, under Divine Providence, he was a powerful instrument in spreading Chris-

tianity throughout the Roman world. Under many of the emperors, as I have told you, the Christians were cruelly persecuted: under all, they lived a life of obscurity and contempt. At Rome, and in one or two other places, they had at times been forced to take shelter in under-ground burial-places called catacombs—in which you will still see small dark caverns, that were used in these frightful days of persecution as chapels and churches. Though the beautiful precepts of virtue contained in the Gospel had drawn into the Christian Church a great portion of the worth, and the genius, and the sinew of the Roman nation, the hatred of the people of the old religion was not quenched, but was rather aggravated by time. Even wise and honest men—like the great historian TACITUS—despised the Christians, spoke of them as we might do of the followers of Joe Smith, and thought it no great harm if they were knocked about from time to time.

All this underwent a startling change when Constantine entered Rome as emperor. Though he did not openly become a Christian himself, he took the Christians into high favor, made several of them his counselors, and founded churches—among others, it is said, St. John of Lateran, at Rome, which is still called the Mother of churches. When the Emperor favored the Christians, all the inferior officers of government favored them too, as a matter of course; and it becoming quite honorable and respectable to be a Christian, the churches were soon too small to hold the crowds that now embraced Christianity.

When I think of this wonderful change, and when I see what Christianity has done for the world, I can not find words to describe the debt we all owe to the reign of Constantine.

You are told every Sabbath at church how our hopes of salvation in a world to come rest on our faith in Christ's Gospel, which Constantine's reign helped so powerfully to spread.

I know of nothing which has done so much for our well-being in this world. Which has so deeply engraven on men's hearts the excellence of truth, justice, kindness. Which has so powerfully taught that we were not placed here to seek our own selfish good, but to labor for each other, for mankind. Which has helped so largely to raise woman to her rightful place, and to clothe her with modesty, gentleness, loveliness of heart. Which has shed such holiness round the family tie, or so closely bound fathers, mothers, sons, brothers, sisters together in a bond of affection. Which has so plainly led to political freedom, or aided so directly to create those free institutions which are among our greatest blessings.

In remembrance of this—though we must pity Constantine for his doubts and his trimming about religion—we can not but admit that his reign was one of the most fortunate eras in history. A long and troubled period had yet to elapse before the Christian religion was firmly established and rightly understood; wars were to come, and quarrels and persecutions of one set of Christians by another; great mistakes were to be made, and seas of

blood to be spilled in the correcting of them; but the first step toward the great triumph of Christianity was accomplished when Constantine entered Rome at the head of his armies.

To return to him, he commenced his rule in Italy by a most excellent act. He broke up the guards, scattered them throughout Italy, and razed their barrack to the earth. They had been the curse of Rome for three centuries; it was a happy, happy day when the city was cleansed of them.

In memory of this blessing, and also of the establishment of liberty of conscience, the people of Rome raised to Constantine an arch with the inscription, "To the Founder of our Peace." It is still standing, and it is pleasant to look at it and think of the changes which have taken place since those stones were hewn square and placed one upon another by the masons. Otherwise, it is not worth looking at; for the sculptures which adorn it were stolen from a monument of Trajan's.

While Constantine was establishing himself at Rome, the two other emperors, Licinius and Maximin, quarreled and went to war. Licinius conquered; and being a cruel savage, not only put to death his rival, but killed his young children, and a number of men and women likewise, simply because they had been his friends.

The year after, Constantine and Licinius quarreled. Constantine attacked him, defeated him, and stripped him of several provinces. Then the two emperors made friends. Licinius married Constantine's sister, and they swore eternal affection. The

affection lasted eight years—a long time between emperors ; but at last it wore out, and they went to war again. Both emperors had great armies and large fleets : there was one battle fought near Adrianople ; and another at a place we call Scutari. Constantine won both, and shortly afterward, not in a very honorable manner, got Licinius into his possession, imprisoned him for a while, then put him to death.

So now, at last, out of all the six emperors Constantine was the only one living, and the master of the whole empire.

A sad trouble soon put an end to his glorification at his success. His son CRISPUS was detected in a conspiracy against him. Constantine punished him cruelly ; he sent him to a dungeon in the country ; and there, without notice or trial, a band of assassins, sent by his father, crept into his cell one day, closed the door, and put him to death.

They say that Constantine afterward put his wife Fausta to death, by stifling her in a hot bath ; but this is not at all certain.

The Romans believed it, however ; and many of them who were not overfond of Constantine on account of his favoring the Christians, openly said that he was Nero come back again. Their taunts came to his ears, and disgusted him with Rome. He began to look about him for a new city.

They say that he first thought of rebuilding the old city of Troy, in Asia Minor ; but that while he was laying out the land an eagle caught up one of the surveying lines and carried it off, across the Hellespont, to the town of Byzantium, which decid-

ed Constantine to build there instead. This may very possibly have been the case, for Constantine was a man of a superstitious mind.

At all events, he chose Byzantium to be the site of his city, and gave it his own name, CONSTANTINOPLE, which, as you know, it still bears. It was delightfully situated in every respect; and to have chosen it, out of all the sites in the world, for a new capital, shows that Constantine was a man of remarkable judgment. You know what an important part it has played in history, and still plays.

Constantine spent immense sums in improving and enlarging it—twelve millions of dollars of American money for the walls, aqueducts, and porticoes alone. As there were no sculptors in those days able to make decent statues, he stripped Asia and Greece, and Italy too, to beautify his favorite city: succeeded so well that people said nothing was wanting to make it equal to old Athens or Rome but men. Men, unhappily, Constantine could neither buy nor steal.

Settled down here, Constantine began to make laws for the empire. Some of them were excellent. I will only mention two.

He forbade parents exposing their new-born infants to perish of cold and hunger, and provided hospitals where abandoned infants might be taken care of and educated. This law was much needed in Italy, where all these ceaseless wars, and imperial tyrannies, and exactions of the guards had made people so poor that they tried to get rid of their children as soon as they were born.

The other law forbade gladiator-fights. It did not wholly succeed in Italy, where the people liked the cruel sport so much that they kept it up for many years in spite of the law ; but it put an end to it in the other cities of the empire.

Toward the close of his reign he had a war to wage with the Goths, who came swarming down, as usual, upon the Danube ; but the old Emperor showed them that his spirit was strong within him still, and defeated them in two battles. There is a curious story about this war. Some one had brought Constantine a handful of rusty nails, which he said had belonged to the cross of Christ ; the Emperor bought them, had them driven into his saddle, and superstitiously believed that they were a charm which would protect him from injury.

On his death-bed, his friends begged him to say whether or no he was a Christian. He said, for the first time, that he was decidedly a Christian, and was baptized. A day or two afterward he died, at the age of sixty-three, having reigned altogether nearly thirty-one years.

In his day and after his death it was the fashion for the Christians to make him out an angel, and the writers of the opposite religions a perfect monster. I believe some Christians of a later date still continued to follow this fashion. In our time, it is safe to tell the truth ; and the truth about Constantine is, that he was a good emperor, a tolerably good man, as men went in those days, but no Christian at all.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

CONSTANTIUS.

WHEN Constantine had breathed his last breath, his servants dressed his body in silken robes, and laid it out in great state, on the imperial bed. There it lay for I do not know how long; and day after day the courtiers and chief persons in the government called to pay their respects to it, just as they used to do to the living Emperor.

At last it was buried, and the question was, who was to succeed to the empire. Constantine had left three sons—CONSTANTINE, CONSTANTIUS, and CONSTANS—besides a number of brothers and nephews. He had appointed his three sons to succeed him, each reigning over a third of the empire; and Constantius made matters still surer by ordering a wholesale massacre of his uncles and cousins. Two of the latter—young boys named GALLUS and JULIAN—were the only ones he spared out of the whole family.

Then he had a meeting with his two brothers, and agreed upon a division of the empire between them. Constantine, the eldest, got Spain, Gaul, and Britain; Constans, Italy, Illyria and Africa; and Constantius, the East. Having thus split up the empire to suit them, these three brothers parted with many loving embraces, and immediately began to plot against each other.

The first to quarrel were Constantine and Constans. Constantine said his younger brother had more than his share of territory, and marched an army into Italy to prove it was so. However, on the way, he got killed by his soldiers, so there was an end of the question and of him too.

Constans took his brother's third of the empire, and was now much more powerful than Constantius. Before he had time to contrive any mischief, however, a rebellion broke out in Gaul, where he happened to be; and the soldiers chose one MAGNENTIUS, a rough swordsman who could neither read nor write, to be emperor. He sent a party of swift cut-throats after Constans; they caught him as he was riding, for his life, to the south, and dispatched him without any ceremony.

So now two of Constantine's sons were out of the way, and a new man up in their place. Constantius, the surviving son, was all this while fighting with the Persians in Asia, and getting terribly beaten: nine bloody battles he fought with the Persian king, SAPOR, lost eight of them, and did not win the ninth. I dare say he was tired of the work by this time; for when he heard of his brother's murder, he said that his brother's blood called on him for vengeance, turned about, left some of his generals to carry on the war against the Persians, and made ready to fight Magnentius.

The latter sent him word that he would be glad to divide the empire between them; but Constantius replied that he could not hear of such a thing: he would make no peace with his brother's murder-

er. After a time, however, finding himself reduced to great straits, and fearing that he would be overcome in the struggle, he changed his mind about the murder affair, and asked would Magnentius meet him and settle the dispute in a friendly way?

Magnentius hadn't sense enough to say Yes. He answered, that if Constantius chose to give up his authority altogether his life should be spared. And Constantius being, of course, not willing to agree to so bad a bargain, the war went on more furiously than ever. It was settled at last by a great battle at a place called Mursæ, near the spot where the Drave falls into the Danube—a battle so terrible that it is said that half of both armies were left on the place. Constantius won it, his heavy horsemen all clad in steel riding down the troops of Magnentius, and scoffing at their darts and spears, which could not pierce the steel coats. Very soon after this Magnentius killed himself, and so Constantius became sole emperor.

He was a weak, foolish, narrow-minded man, who let himself be ruled and bullied by his servants, and a swarm of vile Asiatics who were always about him. He had so little real power in the government that it was commonly said of him that he was not a bad man to make friends with, for he had some influence with the chief favorite EUSEBIUS.

He pretended to be a Christian, but his Christianity was very uncomfortable of its kind. In his time the Christians were divided among themselves on points of doctrine; they quarreled with each other, and fought as bitterly as they might have done with

the people of the old religions, trying to convince each other with swords, and pikes, and tortures; which, I believe, has happened once or twice since the time of Constantius. The Emperor enjoyed the dispute amazingly, and when he had no wars on hand, fanned the discord by pretending first to be on one side, then on the other.

As he had no children of his own, he resolved to make his cousin Gallus his heir, and gave him the government of an Eastern province. Gallus turning out very badly indeed, and becoming hateful to the people by his cruelties, and oppressions, and wicked life, Constantius sent for him, and put him to death privately.

He would have killed his other cousin, Julian, but for the entreaties of his wife, the Empress EUSEBIA, a kind-hearted, motherly woman, who begged Julian's life, and even persuaded Constantius to make him his heir in the place of Gallus. Constantius never liked Julian, and was very slow in making up his mind to adopt him. He kept him nearly a year in prison at Milan, and then sent him to Greece, so that he should be out of the way; but, in the end, the Empress triumphed, Julian was recalled, and sent into Gaul with the title of heir to the throne.

Constantius generally lived at Constantinople, like his father. Once, when he happened to be at Milan, he thought he would like to see Rome. He went thither, and, they say, was much struck with the wonderful beauty of the old capital. It was indeed a royal city, such as we who see it in its ruins—ragged, mouldy, broken ruins—can hardly picture.

Constantine made it a present of an obelisk which he stole from Egypt. It is the greatest obelisk known, being ninety-nine feet high without the pedestal, and is said to have been erected at Thebes by an old king of Egypt who lived at the same time as Deborah and Barak, of whom we read in the Bible. For sixteen hundred years or so it stood where this old king had placed it, and the Egyptian priests celebrated their queer worship of cows and bulls around its base. Constantine pulled it down, and built a great ship on purpose to carry it across the sea to his own city on the Hellespont; his son now gave it to the Romans, who set it up in the middle of the great circus. In one of the furious battles which were fought long afterward at Rome, this old obelisk got knocked down again, and lay a long while in the dust, like any common stone, till a wise Pope picked it up, and had it set on its pedestal in the great square of St. John of Lateran, where you may see it to this day. On high days, the priests and cardinals, with their singing boys, and their censers, and their bright pictures, walk round it in procession to go to the great church opposite, for all the world like the old Egyptian priests of Apis.

Constantius reigned twenty-four years, and did nothing at all worth remembering beyond what I have mentioned.

In the twenty-third year of his reign he grew jealous of his cousin Julian, who had won several victories over the Franks and Alemanni in Gaul. In order to crush him, he sent word that Julian must dispatch all his best troops to Italy, where

they were much wanted. Julian knew what this message meant, and when the soldiers clamored at being sent across the Alps, he took good care to encourage their ill temper. They say that he didn't want to be emperor; but my opinion is that his reluctance was only a sham, and he would have been terribly disappointed if the soldiers had taken him at his word. At all events, when they revolted openly, and cried at the top of their voices that they would have Julian for emperor, and not Constantius any longer, Julian overcame his scruples, and put himself at their head to march against his cousin.

Constantius was in Asia at the time, fighting in a feeble way with the Persians. He said he was dreadfully shocked at the ingratitude of Julian—he had so nice a sense of honor himself, you know—and set out, as he said, for the purpose of chastising the young rebel. The mayor of one of the cities he passed through, begged the favor of having Julian's head stuck upon a pole in his city, after the ungrateful fellow had been taken and killed, and Constantius did not refuse the request.

But in the midst of all these fine hopes, as Constantius was journeying through Asia Minor, he took ill, and died. There was then no one left to oppose Julian.

VOL. II.—R

CHAPTER LXXV.

JULIAN.—JOVIAN.

THE new emperor, JULIAN, is a very famous man in history. He was, as you remember, a nephew of Constantine, and one of the few who escaped the dreadful massacre which marked the beginning of Constantius's reign. Constantius had him educated by a couple of Christian teachers.

Whether these teachers did not understand their business, or were idle, or how it was, I know not, but young Julian grew up intensely hating Christianity. When he was sent to Greece, as I mentioned in the last chapter, he fell in love with the old Greek religion, which I am not much surprised at, as he was a young man of an ardent, enthusiastic disposition, and very likely to be influenced by the splendid temples, and lovely statues, and other works of art and of genius which were clustered in Greece round the memory of the old gods and goddesses. He left Greece hating Christianity more than ever.

In Gaul, he was an excellent ruler: cared wisely for the people; beat back the Franks, and made himself deeply loved by the citizens of the west. Most of these, or a great many of them, were Christians; but Julian, for fear of his cousin Constantius, kept his opinions prudently to himself.

They were known, however, before he became

emperor, and the Christians trembled lest he should begin his reign by reviving the cruel persecutions which had ceased since the time of Diocletian. He disappointed them. One of his very first acts was to proclaim perfect freedom of conscience throughout the empire. A few years before, the meaning of this would have been that the Christians were at liberty to pray as they pleased ; but now the Christians had had the upper hand for a good many years, had pulled down the temples of the old religions in places, and had persecuted violently some of their own people who did not agree with them on points of doctrine. So the present meaning of freedom of conscience was, that the old religion should be observed by all who liked it best, and that the Christians should not persecute each other.

I wish very much that Julian had stopped here, and gone no farther in his religious changes ; for he was in many respects a very estimable man, and no doubt tried all his life to do what he thought was right. But he was strangely superstitious and fanciful. He believed that the old gods and goddesses conversed with him in his sleep, and said he could tell the voice of Minerva from that of Jupiter (which ought not to have been a very difficult matter, one would think), and assured his friends that all these old gods and their wives were constantly worrying him to put down Christianity and restore the Greek religion. When these fancies were strong upon him, he made many harsh laws against the Christians ; would not allow them to be teachers or public officers ; forbade them to read the old poets and

philosophers, as, said he, people who do not believe in the old gods can not enjoy Homer or Virgil; obliged the Christians to make good all the property of the old temples they had destroyed during the last reigns; and altogether did his best to bring Christianity into contempt. These acts of his were not only hurtful in themselves to the Christians, but they were the occasion of others far more cruel and unjust. For, when it was known that the Emperor disliked the Christians, every courtier and every mean-spirited governor (of whom there were a good many) thought to please Julian by persecuting them; and in this way many excellent priests and bishops, and men and women, came to violent ends. Julian's friends said the Emperor disapproved these persecutions, and very likely he did not wish to earn the name of a persecutor; but it is quite plain they did not irritate him much, or he would not have allowed them to take place.

A Christian poet of those days said of Julian that he was a traitor to his God, but no traitor to the world. He was, in fact, a very good emperor. When he went to Constantinople, on Constantius's death, he found the palace swarming with hungry idlers, and servants, and debauched men and women, and vermin of all kinds. There were a thousand cooks, and a thousand cup-bearers, and a thousand barbers, and more fiddlers and dancers, and other useless hangers on, than would have filled a city. When Julian sent for a barber to shave him, a tall fellow made his appearance in grand costume, and looking so grand in his gold and silver, and silk and feathers,

that the Emperor thought he must be at least the Treasurer of the empire.

Julian made short work of all these people. With one short edict he swept them out of the palace, and sent them into the world to earn an honest livelihood. Their places he filled with useful working men like himself.

It is hard to believe the stories which are told of his industry. They say that he kept several relays of secretaries always busy. When one set was worn out and went away to sleep or eat, another set took their place; the Emperor alone never seemed to need rest or food. He could write a letter himself, it is said, and dictate another at the same time; but I fancy the letters that were tossed off on this plan can not have been models to copy. He was, however, beyond all doubt, a great scholar; wrote beautiful Greek; and spared so little time from work that his hands were usually dirty and his beard uncombed.

After he had been emperor some months, he was seized with a passion—like so many other emperors—for rivaling the fame of Alexander the Great. He mustered the largest army that had ever yet marched out of the Roman empire to the East, and invaded Persia. For some time he was moderately successful, and laid siege to the great Persian city of Ctesiphon. He could not take it, however, and being misled by a treacherous Persian who had joined him, he rashly advanced into the burning deserts beyond.

For many weary days, under a scorching sun, the troops marched eastward, always hoping to meet the

Persian king and end the war; but no king found they, nothing saw they but the same endless waste of hot sand beneath, and the glaring sky above. At last Julian turned back. The panting and parched Romans began to trudge over the desert once more, and hoped to gain their own territory; but now the long-expected Persians loomed up in swarms and clouds, mercilessly harassing the retreating enemy. They fought like the Parthians; hurling their javelins, and shooting their arrows from a distance, and galloping off when the Romans turned upon them.

In one of these attacks of theirs an arrow struck the Emperor in the breast and gave him a mortal wound. He fell from his horse and fainted. They carried him into his tent; when he recovered his senses, he sprang from his bed, delirious, and called for his horse and his sword.

But his fighting days were over. Only a short while before, while he was sitting in his tent one night, brooding over his situation, and thinking of the wearisome march on the morrow, he thought he saw the genius of Rome stand before him, with her head covered with a funeral veil. She raised the veil, he thought, and looked at Julian mournfully for a moment, then let it fall, and slowly, sadly faded from his view.

This vision had prepared him for death, and he was not surprised when his surgeons told him his wound was mortal. He talked some time with his friends on the immortality of the soul; called for a cup of water, drank it, and died. He was only

thirty-two at the time of his death, and had reigned one year and eight months.

The soldiers, in great straits and suffering, being still in the Persian desert, hastily chose a new emperor, one JOVIAN, who had been a sort of chamberlain in the household of Julian. He led them out of Persia, having purchased peace from King Sapor by giving him up five Roman provinces.

Jovian was a Christian, and gave orders that the Christians should not be interfered with in their worship. He would doubtless have done more for them, but that, on his first arrival in Europe, he overate himself at a supper, and was found dead in his bed next morning, having only reigned a few months.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

VALENTINIAN I.—HIS BROTHER, AND SONS.

FOR ten days after Jovian's death there was no emperor chosen to succeed him ; but at the end of this time the soldiers in the camp at Nice held a meeting and elected VALENTINIAN. He was a bold, skillful soldier, a fine, handsome man, and a Christian. Under Julian's reign, it was said, the Emperor had wished him to sacrifice to the old gods, and threatened him with exile if he refused ; but he said, scornfully, that neither reward nor punishment would induce him to bow to the absurd gods of Greece or Rome. Whether he was exiled or no—which is a matter of some doubt—he gained great credit among the Christians by his fearless fidelity ; they were in high glee when they heard of his election as emperor.

Some few of them would have been better pleased still if he had put down the old religion altogether, and quite expected it. But he said that every man should pray as he chose, forbade all stripes and persecutions for religion's sake, and only laid his hand on the magicians, who were very numerous at that time, and drove a capital trade by pretending to reveal the future.

To help him to rule the empire, Valentinian the First made his brother, VALENS, emperor of the

East. This Valens was a weak, cowardly, cruel prince; the people of the East soon learned to know and hate him. Once, in their disgust at his oppressions, they rebelled, and made one of the courtiers, named Procopius, emperor; and he actually held Constantinople and the chief power in the East for three years. He might have kept it altogether—for Valens was far too miserable a creature to cope with him—but for his own folly. After winning a battle, and driving back the Emperor's forces, he lost his wits, grew proud and insolent, and very soon contrived to make himself as much hated as Valens. The people deserting him, he was attacked again, defeated, and soon afterward cruelly put to death by the blood-thirsty Emperor.

Valentinian, meanwhile, lived partly at Milan and partly in Gaul, where there was no end to the wars with the old enemies of the Romans—the Franks and Alemanni. Valentinian was a good leader, and very prompt and vigorous; but he was of a wrathful disposition, and savagely fond of blood.

For the least offense he would roar out to his guards to cut a man's head off. Vast numbers of innocent persons were murdered by his orders during his reign. He had two pet bears, which he kept in a den close to his bedroom. These animals were fed on the living bodies of criminals condemned to death; and they say that the Emperor used to delight in seeing them tear an unhappy wretch limb from limb.

His angry temper was the ruin of him at last. Hearing that the Quadi, a wild race which lived

north of the Danube, had begun to molest the Roman provinces in their neighborhood, he led an expedition into their country, and laid it waste with fire and sword. The Quadi, humbled and distressed, sent messengers to him to treat for peace ; but when Valentinian saw them he flew into such a rage, and stormed so savagely at them, that in his fury he burst a blood-vessel and died, aged fifty-four, having reigned nearly twelve years.

His brother came to a still more miserable end. As he was idling in some luxurious city of the East, he was visited by a messenger from the Goths, who said that a new and very savage nation called the HUNS were pressing on them from the north and the east, eating up their substance, and plundering their houses. The messenger asked whether Valens would let the Goths cross the Danube and settle down quietly in the Roman provinces.

If Valens had been a statesman, he would have answered No ; being a simpleton he answered, Yes, the Goths might cross, but they must leave their arms behind them, and give him up the young men of their best families to be hostages for the tribe. So the Goths crossed, an immense multitude, counting over two hundred thousand fighting men, and, as you may easily guess, they did *not* leave their arms behind them. However, Valens got possession of a great number of their young men, and scattered them through the cities of Asia.

Now these Goths were not by any means savages. They had learned a great many useful arts in their intercourse with the Romans ; they understood war

as well as the best of the Roman legions ; they were rich, not only in flocks and herds, but also in gold, silver, and precious stuffs ; they were larger men, stronger, and far better able to stand fatigue than the soldiers of the East ; and they were, every man of them, Christians. A very troublesome set of people, you see, they were likely to prove in case of disputes with them.

Disputes did arise, and very quickly too, after their admission into the Roman provinces. Some Romans tried to ill-use the Goths ; I dare say the Goths helped themselves freely to whatever they wanted ; at all events, a quarrel broke out between them and the Romans, and a battle was fought, in which the latter were badly beaten.

Valens, as foolish as usual, set about chastising the Goths, who quickly overran the country which is now Turkey in Europe. He marched away from Constantinople to Adrianople, which the Goths were besieging : there he gave them battle, and there he was defeated with such prodigious slaughter that the Romans said nothing had ever been known like it since the dreadful day of Cannæ. Valens himself, badly wounded in the fight, was carried to a cottage by some of his guards. A party of Goths surrounded the cottage, and tried to get inside ; but the doors being firmly closed, they set fire to the building and burned it to the ground, with all the people who were within.

Valentinian the First had died some time before these wars, and had been succeeded by his two sons—GRATIAN and VALENTINIAN THE SECOND. Gra-

tian was a gentle, well-bred youth, who had no vice or wickedness about him ; Valentinian was a baby, in the arms of his mother.

When Gratian heard of his uncle's fate, he chose an excellent officer, a Spaniard named THEODOSIUS, to rule over the East, and sent him to Constantinople. He went himself to Gaul, and fixed his headquarters at Paris, leaving his baby brother at Milan.

The old border wars were still going on in Gaul and Germany, and if Gratian had been a man of vigor, he might soon have made himself as great a name for his conduct as he had already for his mild virtues. Unhappily, he was feeble and boyish ; he left the affairs of state to counselors who managed them badly, and spent his time in hunting and sport. He was fond of dressing in the Scythian costume, which was a harmless fancy in itself, but greatly offended the national pride of the Romans in Gaul.

They were losing their esteem for him when a Spaniard, named MAXIMUS, rose in arms in Britain, and persuaded the Britons to choose him emperor. He raised the greatest army that had ever gone out of Britain—desperate fellows they were, who never gave up, or turned back—and at their head marched into Gaul.

Gentle Gratian had only time to throw aside his hunting spear, leap on his horse, and ride away for his life to Lyons. He might have gained a safe refuge in the East ; but feeble to the last, he allowed the treacherous Governor of Lyons to persuade him to stay there ; and so when Maximus's men came

riding down in hot speed after him, he was given up, and soon put out of his pain.

Maximus and his fierce Britons marched on, and on, through Gaul, over the Alps, and into Italy. Young Valentinian and his mother started off in great dismay, and fled to their friend Theodosius, the Emperor of the East.

Theodosius had his hands full at the time with the Goths, whom he was skillfully dividing and diverting from his empire; one of his generals had just massacred all their young men; and so at first he was very cool with young Valentinian, and even thought of acknowledging Maximus. But, as good fortune would have it, in the course of the discussion Theodosius fell in with Valentinian's sister, GALLA, the loveliest creature in the world. She pleaded her brother's cause so earnestly that she won it; nor that alone, but the heart of Theodosius likewise. So they were married, and her dower was that her brother Gratian's blood should be avenged, and Valentinian restored.

Theodosius was a man of his word. He marched against Maximus before the honeymoon was over, defeated him, and let the soldiers put him to death. Then he set Valentinian on the throne of the West once more, gave him a counselor and general—one ARBOGASTES, a chief of the Franks, who had entered the Roman service—then went back to Constantinople.

But all soon went wrong. Arbogastes made himself the real master of the empire; and when Valentinian tried to exercise authority, he found that

he had none. Every one treated him like a child. He bore it all for a while, complaining in a feeble way from time to time to his friend Theodosius; and at last, in a spasm of energy, he called Arbogastes before him, and handed him a paper dismissing him from his rank.

But the proud Frank read the paper, and crying, "My rank does not depend on the smile or frown of an emperor," tore it up before Valentinian's face, and trampled on it.

The poor young Emperor could only wring his hands and bemoan himself. A few days afterward he could not do even this; for he was found dead in his bed, how murdered, or by whom, was never made certain.

Arbogastes would not take the title of emperor on Valentinian's death, but gave it to a teacher of rhetoric named EUGENIUS, who was, of course, his very humble servant. They did not long enjoy their ill-gotten power; for Galla, dying in child-bed just about this time, adjured her husband to avenge the death of this second brother of hers as he had avenged the first; and he vowed he would.

Arbogastes fought bravely, and won one battle; but in the end Theodosius out-generaled him, and put his army to flight. The professor Eugenius, taken prisoner, fell at Theodosius's feet, and begged his life; but the Emperor, remembering his vow, let his guards strike the wretched man's head off as he knelt. Arbogastes wandered about in the woods for some time, and at last killed himself.

So once more all the emperors of the West, right-

ful and wrongful, were killed off. Theodosius went to Milan, and thought for some time whom to appoint. He decided at last to make his son HONORIUS emperor of the West, and his son ARCADIUS of the East. It was a very bad plan, as you will see.

Four months after the death of Eugenius, Theodosius fell ill at Milan. He had led an active life, always fighting, and always victorious; had earned great fame by making a number of useful laws, and restoring peace to the Eastern empire; and had dealt a fatal blow to the old religions by giving the Christians leave to break down the temples, and even to persecute the priests of the old gods. His body was worn out, though he was only forty-nine; he was just able to give the purple cloak to Honorius at Milan when he died.

This was the final separation of the empire. It had been slowly crumbling to pieces for some time; it was now fairly split in two.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

HONORIUS.

HONORIUS was not eleven years old when he found himself emperor of the Western half of the empire. Happily for him his wise father had given him a guardian or master—a brave and energetic soldier named STILICHO, who had married Theodosius's niece, SERENA. To bind Stilicho still closer to the young Emperor, the latter was betrothed to Stilicho's daughter, MARIA. The marriage was performed when Honorius reached the age of fourteen, his wife being a still younger child.

Honorius lived nearly twenty-nine years after he was crowned, and during all that time was called by the title and surrounded by the pomp of an emperor, though he had no more to do with the affairs of the empire than many a captain in his guards. At first Stilicho was the real emperor.

When a governor in Africa, named GILDO, who was a Moor, but had risen to high rank in the Roman service, rebelled against Honorius, and said he and his provinces would belong to the Eastern and not the Western half of the empire, Stilicho undertook to bring him to reason. He tried argument; that failing, he used threats; and when these were despised by the haughty Moor, he found another Moor—a brother of Gildo's—who had been mal-

treated by him, and was burning for revenge, and sent him with an army into Africa. The two brothers met, and a bloody battle was about to begin, when Stilicho's general, by a trick, persuaded his brother's legions to desert, and drove Gildo into a barren island, where he hanged himself. The conquering brother returned in glory; but as he was crossing a bridge in company with Stilicho, a few days afterward, he was pushed into the water and drowned. Every body said that the affair was of Stilicho's contriving; and it became plainer still that he was the emperor.

He had soon tougher enemies than Moorish rebels. The Goths had risen again, and finding Greece a pleasant country to live in, full of cities very convenient to plunder, had settled down there, and committed terrible havoc. They were led by a brave and skillful king, whose name was ALRIC, or ALARIC.

The poor plundered Greeks sent over to Stilicho to beg for help. Stilicho, nothing loth, marched away to Greece, and disposed his troops so skillfully that he fancied he had caught Alaric in a trap in the Peloponnesus; but the bold Goth, hastily gathering a few boats and rafts, crossed the Gulf of Corinth unexpectedly, and encamped his army strongly in the hilly region of Epirus. Stilicho was enraged at his escape; but as he had freed the cities of Greece from the Goths, he was welcomed as a conqueror in Italy, and the people paid him extraordinary honors.

He was long enough at rest to make severe laws against the practice of the old religion, which en-

tirely rooted it out. Some of the temples were destroyed, with the images of the gods they contained; others were turned into churches for the Christians; and those who still clung to the worship of the old gods had almost as hard a time as the early Christians had had.

Then Alaric rose again. Over the mountains he came this time with his Goths, and began to ravage Italy. The young Emperor, who was seventeen or eighteen at the time, had no spirit at all. The moment he heard the Goths were near he ran away from Milan and hid himself near the Alps.

Stilicho left the capital too, but for a very different reason. He went to Germany, Gaul, and Britain, and collected every fighting man he could find, leaving the old forts, and castles, and walls without a man to guard them. Then with these soldiers he recrossed the Alps, and marched down to meet Alaric. There was one battle near the spot where Turin now stands, and another under the walls of Verona (this last was fought at Easter, while the Goths were busy with their devotions). Stilicho won both of them. The Goths were now in great straits.

Alaric called a council of his wisest counselors and bravest warriors, and asked them to say what in their opinion it was best to do. One and all, sitting round their camp fire, said it was best to make peace and escape out of Italy. "And I," said Alaric, "will find in Italy either a kingdom or a grave."

For all this, he found it best to escape for the

present, and quietly marched away again into Hungary.

Stilicho got more glory still from this campaign; he even went to Rome, taking with him the Emperor Honorius, like a dressed-up doll, and had a triumphal procession, which must have looked like the ghost of an old Roman triumph. One good thing was done on this occasion, however. There were shows given; and as usual, notwithstanding the law, among the shows were gladiator-fights. During these, a good monk whose name was TELE-MACHUS, who had learned humanity from the Gospel, leaped down into the arena and tried to separate the gladiators. The people were so enraged at his interference that they stoned him to death on the spot. This led to a law being passed forever and wholly forbidding gladiator-fights; and this time the law was obeyed. Honorius has always had the credit of it; but I dare say Stilicho was the real reformer.

He had enough real fighting always on hand to satisfy his wants. Now came more enemies into Italy, Germans of all races and tribes, under a fierce and valiant chief named RADAGAISUS. They laid siege to Florence. Stilicho marched up against them, and instead of fighting, girt their camp round with a strong intrenchment. They tried to get out, but could not; and hunger very soon compelling them to yield, Radagaisus was killed, and his soldiers sold as slaves. So Stilicho's glory grew brighter and brighter, and people said he was as great a man as the old Romans.

He had so much power, and the Emperor so little,—he spent his time feeding chickens at Ravenna, where he had built himself a strong castle, in the midst of marshes, so as to be safe from attack—that very soon jealousy raised up rivals against him. The chief of these was one OLYMPIUS, a very spiteful, wicked man, who pretended to be extremely religious. This Olympius was employed in the Emperor's household; and as he often gave Honorius pious counsel, he soon had a chance to say that he thought Stilicho a very dangerous man indeed, and the Emperor should beware of him. Poor craven Honorius was terribly frightened at this, and asked Olympius what was best to be done? And Olympius said if the Emperor would leave the business to him he would soon settle it.

They happened to be at Pavia a short while afterward. All at once, at a signal from Olympius, a band of murderers appeared and slaughtered a number of Stilicho's friends who were there.

When the news reached Stilicho and the army at Bologna, the soldiers rose, and with a great uproar called upon Stilicho to take the title of emperor at once, and put down Honorius and his friends. But he—whether from virtue or want of nerve—said decidedly that he would do no such thing. At this the soldiers, disgusted, deserted him; and Stilicho fled for safety to a church.

Pious Olympius sent to the bishop of the church to demand the fugitive. The bishop answered that the church was a sanctuary, and that he would not consent to give up any man to his ruin. Olympius

replied that he didn't intend the least harm to Stilicho : he only wanted to talk to him. So the bishop, who was probably afraid of Olympius, opened the church doors ; a band of soldiers rushed in, seized Stilicho, and told him they had come to put him to death. He died without flinching, bravely and sternly, like an old Roman ; his blood stained the porch of the church.

It was a very bad business for the empire, his death ; for Alaric no sooner heard of it, than over the Alps he rushed again with his Goths, more ravenous than ever. There was no one to oppose him ; Honorius and Olympius were quaking and trembling in their strong castle at Ravenna : he marched straight to Rome, and laid siege to it.

You may form an opinion of the character of the nobles from the first act of the Senate when it was announced that Alaric was on the Flaminian Road, marching to Rome. That body met, and groaned, and bewailed itself ; then bursting into a rage, ordered that Serena, the widow of the brave Stilicho, should be put to death.

Alaric compassed the city about with his brave Goths, and soon reduced it to great distress. The Senate sent two deputies to him to beg for peace. The deputies made a high-flown speech, talked of the valor of the Romans, and especially of the great numbers there were in the city.

“The thicker the hay,” said Alaric, with a scornful laugh, “the easier it is mowed.” And he added that he would lead away his army if the Romans gave him all their gold and silver, all their precious

merchandise, and all their foreign slaves : not otherwise.

“But,” said the deputies, in an agony, “if such are your demands, O King, what do you mean to leave us?”

“Your lives!”

And as the Romans had no choice, they agreed to Alaric's terms. He took less than he had at first exacted, and marched to the northern part of Italy. From his camp he sent to Honorius to say, that if Honorius would give him certain provinces on the eastern border of his empire, with the rank of a Roman general, he would leave Italy and never return.

Olympius, who managed Honorius at the time, flew into a rage at what he called Alaric's insolence, and wouldn't make any arrangement with him of any kind.

So Alaric, out of patience with such folly, marched down to Rome again, took it, and made the Mayor, ATTALUS, emperor. Then he sent to Honorius again to ask would he now come to terms?

Honorius's court was a more wretched den of intrigue and folly than I can describe. All the servants—upper and lower—were always fighting with each other; now one was down and his head was off; next day, his conqueror was down, and his head went too. Olympius was upset by one Jovius, and escaped by a miracle; after a time he got back into favor and dispatched Jovius; then some one upset him again, cut his ears off, and scourged him to death. But whoever was up or whoever down,

Honorius went on feeding his fowls, and let any body who chose manage his affairs.

His master for the time being made answer to Alaric by a herald that his crimes were so great that it wasn't the least use for him to seek forgiveness from Honorius, and hadn't he better go away, and not disturb the Emperor any more?

Then Alaric—sick of talking to such idiots—marched for the third time to Rome. Some traitor opened the Salarian gate (it is standing still), and the Goths rushed into Rome. They were the first foreign army that had entered Rome since the Gauls had burned it just six hundred years before; and the Romans felt, when they saw them, that all was lost. Nor were they far wrong. Alaric gave up the city to be plundered, bidding his soldiers spare nothing but the churches. Right well did the Goths understand the work, and ruthlessly did they perform it. Whatever was of value and portable they seized; many fine buildings they burned; crowds of handsome Roman boys and girls they took as slaves; and such havoc did they spread that for years after the cities of the empire were filled with Roman beggars, like the ashes of a volcano after a great eruption.

They say that when the news reached Ravenna, a servant ran hastily to Honorius, crying, "It is all over with Rome!"

"How so?" asked Honorius, whose thoughts were fixed on a pet hen of his which he had christened Rome, "I only just fed her this instant."

"Alaric has seized and plundered the city of Rome," said the servant,

“Oh!” said the Emperor, “is that all? I was afraid something had happened to my hen.”

Alaric died soon after the sack of Rome, and his half brother, **ATAULF**, or **ADOLPHUS**, became king of the Goths. Adolphus was not by any means so able a man as Alaric; and falling in love with one of his captives, who was a sister of Honorius, he married her (**Attalus**, the ex-emperor, who had been very quickly cast on one side when Alaric had done with him, figuring as first fiddler at the wedding), and went off with her to Spain. There he was murdered, and his widow, **PLACIDIA**, was forced to marry his successor.

There turned up about this time in Italy a brave and honest officer whose name was **CONSTANTIUS**. I think he had seen Placidia before she was carried off by the Goths, and fallen in love with her; for he now took the part of the helpless emperor, and really set Italy in something like order. Then he marched off against the Goths. Instead of fighting them, he proposed to make a treaty, the chief article of which was that they should give up Placidia. The Gothic king asked six hundred thousand measures of corn for her. Constantius agreed: the Goths got the corn and he the lady.

I should think she ought to have been very grateful to Constantius for all the love he had shown for her; but she said she wasn't, and positively disliked him. However, as you may fancy, a man who has been to war for a wife is not likely to give her up when he has won her (especially if she has cost him six hundred thousand measures of corn); so Con-

stantius married the widow—whether she would or no—and began to rule the empire.

Very soon, however, he died ; just in time, too, for Honorius's servants were going to kill him. His wife and her brother had been such friends that they kissed each other from morning till night ; but now they fell out, and Placidia was driven away with her children to Constantinople.

She had hardly gone when Honorius fell ill of dropsy, and died. The most wonderful thing about his reign is that he was not murdered.

During that reign, his half of the empire was in fact ruined. The moment Stilicho took away the garrisons from the forts in Gaul, a swarm of wild races—ALANS, BURGUNDIANS, VANDALS, SUEVI—poured across the frontier : this time they did not come to plunder ; they came to stay, and they staid. Britain became independent. Spain passed into the hands of the Goths. And the Goths fastened their gripe on the throat of the empire in Italy, and never loosed it till Rome was at an end.

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CHAPTER LXXVIII.

VALENTINIAN III.

WHEN Honorius died, his chamberlain, JOHN, took the name of emperor, and for a time persuaded the soldiers to stand by him; but the emperor of the East, THEODOSIUS THE SECOND, objecting to him, and setting up young Valentinian—the son of Constantius and Placidia—the soldiers changed their minds and deserted John. He was seized, and, in the usual cruel manner, his hands were first cut off, and then his head, at the strong place of Aquileia.

Then VALENTINIAN THE THIRD was proclaimed emperor. As he was only six years old, his mother Placidia was the real emperor, and so continued for many years. She had two able generals to help her to govern the empire: one was named BONIFACE, the other ÆTIUS. These two were so active, and so brave, and so vigorous, that, if they could have been friends, perhaps they might have staved off the ruin of the empire for their lifetime at least. But they were madly jealous of each other, and Placidia, at bottom, was jealous of both of them.

The tussle between them began as soon as Valentinian was settled on the throne. Ætius stirred up Placidia's mind against Boniface, and secretly wrote to Boniface to say the Empress intended his

ruin. Boniface, falling into the trap, went away to Africa, and sent word to GENSERIC, king of the Vandals, to cross over and plunder the African provinces.

This Genseric—of whom we shall soon have more to say—was a very bold and blood-thirsty savage. He crossed over from Spain with fifty thousand of his Vandals, and very quickly overran the whole coast of Africa. Boniface, seeing the mischief he did—he spared neither man nor beast, and leveled the cities to the earth—repented of having invited him over, and took up arms against him. But it was too late; there was no resisting Genseric and his Vandals. Boniface was beaten, and forced to make his escape as best he could to Italy.

There was a treaty made with Genseric by which the Romans gave him up all Africa except Carthage and Mauritania. Carthage was the greatest city in the empire next to Rome, and the wickedest. But the Romans had no sooner left Africa than Genseric broke the treaty and seized Carthage. So the Romans lost nearly all their dominions in Africa.

Boniface, on his arrival in Italy, went straight to Placidia, and had an explanation with her. She was a weak woman, who was easily led. Boniface persuaded her that he was her best friend, and Ætius her enemy. So now he rose into favor, and Ætius, who was away in Gaul fighting the Franks, fell into disgrace.

The moment Ætius heard of the return of Boniface, he hurried to Italy, went to Boniface, and said that one of them must die. Boniface thought so

too; so they fought a duel, and Ætius ran Boniface through the body with his spear, and killed him. For this, Placidia exiled Ætius.

She soon found that she could not do without him. A new enemy, the fierce race of HUNS, who had come all the way from China, now began to ravage the empire under their chief, ATTILA. Attila was worse than Alaric. A short squat man, dark of skin, and broad of shoulders; with small, wicked eyes, which were always rolling from side to side; a bald head, flat nose, and a few bristles instead of beard; fond of war and slaughter; as proud and insolent as the proudest Roman emperor. A very terrible foe indeed he proved to the Romans; so terrible that some pious monk, who believed that his ravages were God's punishment for the Roman sins, gave him the awful title of the SCOURGE OF GOD.

Attila amused himself for some time plundering the Eastern empire; how thoroughly and savagely you may learn from the fact that he rubbed out of existence eighty cities, so that, a few years after, no man could tell where they had stood. Then, doubting within himself whether to plunder Constantinople or Rome, he sent messengers to both the Emperors, with the message that "their master and yours, Attila, commands you to prepare a palace for his immediate reception."

Placidia, scared out of her senses by this haughty message, sent in haste to Ætius to beg him to come to her help. He answered the call, arrived in Italy, and took the command of the armies. Placidia dying, and Valentinian being no more of a man than

Honorius, Ætius became the real emperor, though without the title.

It is plain he was a man of remarkable vigor and skill; for he kept the Huns and the other enemies of Rome out of Gaul and Italy for seventeen years. One circumstance which helped him was a singular love affair of Attila's.

The Empress Placidia had had two children—the Emperor Valentinian and a daughter, HONORIA. Honoria was brought up very strictly by her mother, who intended to make a nun of her. This arrangement was not at all to the young lady's taste. She fell in love with one of her servants (having no one else to fall in love with, poor girl!) and was found out, and sent away to Constantinople by her harsh mother, and kept in a sort of convent there, a close prisoner. She was strictly forbidden to marry; and her love affair was reproached to her with tedious and awful severity by the monks and priests of Constantinople.

But the more her keepers lectured her against marriage, the more Honoria wanted to be married; and at last, finding no one bold enough to make love to her where she was, and hearing a great deal of the valor and power of Attila, she sent privately to him, and said she was the Emperor's sister, and didn't in the least want to be a nun, and would he be so good as marry her?

Attila was much surprised at first, as well he might be; but, on second thoughts, reflecting that it would be a fine thing to have the Emperor's sister for a wife, he sent to Constantinople, and demanded

her in marriage. He had a score of wives already ; but the Hun fashion was, the more wives the better.

The Emperor of the East, and the Emperor of the West were greatly perplexed by this demand of Attila's. They said Honoria was married already ; but Attila said he didn't mind that ; they might keep the husband and send him the wife. Then they made other excuses, and argued, and doubted ; said one day they would ; the next day they wouldn't ; and so contrived to waste a great deal of time, and amuse Attila, while Ætius was strengthening the defenses of the empire.

At last Attila would wait no longer. He marched into Gaul. Ætius was ready for him with a great army which he had gathered from all the wild tribes who had settled in the Roman provinces. A bloody battle was fought at Chalons, and Ætius forced Attila to retreat.

The King of the Huns was not so badly hurt, however, but that he could invade Italy, with fire and sword, the next year, calling aloud, as before, for his betrothed Honoria. He laid siege to Aquileia, which was the strong-hold of the north. For many days the Huns encamped opposite the walls, and fought and stormed without success. They lost heart at last, and grumbled that they must go home. As they were growling and murmuring in the presence of Attila, a stork rose from the walls of Aquileia, and fled away with her young.

"See !" cried Attila, "do you think that wise bird would fly away if it did not foresee that its nest was soon to be destroyed ?"

And the Huns, roused by the idea, made a fresh attack with great vigor, forced their way into the place, sacked, and destroyed it. Destroyed it so completely that fifty years afterward the place where it stood was not known.

Then the Scourge of God made ready to take Rome. He was on his way, and the Emperor Valentinian had quite lost his head from fright, when Ætius proposed that the bishop of Rome, or pope, as some called him, a venerable old man named LEO, should be sent to beg mercy for the city from Attila. Leo went on his errand and spoke well and wisely to the fierce King of the Huns. They say that he scared him away by assuring him that God's vengeance would be laid on him if he disobeyed the order of the bishop of Rome. But I dare say Attila would have made short work of Rome and the bishop too, but for the promise made solemnly by Leo that at last Honoria should be given up.

At all events he halted, turned about, and marched out of Italy. While he was waiting for the arrival of Honoria, he married a beautiful girl named Hilda. The wedding was a splendid affair; and Attila was in very joyous spirits, considering the absence of Honoria. But next morning when the servants entered his room, they found Hilda crying by the bedside, and Attila lying dead in the bed, having broken a blood-vessel in the course of the night.

While he was alive Valentinian cringed to Ætius, and let him rule the state as he pleased. But the moment the news of Attila's death reached Rome, all was changed. The miserable Emperor now fan-

cied he could do without Ætius ; and having spread reports of his treachery, paved the way for the old story.

One day Ætius was sent for by the Emperor. He found Valentinian surrounded by guards. The Emperor began to accuse him of various crimes, and in the middle of his speech burst into a fury, drew his sword—he had never drawn it against the Huns—and stabbed Ætius. The guards and servants fell upon him directly and dispatched him.

So fell the only man who could have helped the empire against its enemies.

Valentinian's race was soon cut short. Falling in love with the beautiful wife of a Roman Senator, named MAXIMUS, he sent her word that the Empress desired to see her. When she came, he had her seized by his guards and hurried off to a prison. She escaped soon afterward, told her husband of her wrongs, and bade him avenge her if he was a man.

The business was very quickly done. A plot was formed ; several of the Emperor's servants were in it ; and one day as Valentinian went to see a race in the Field of Mars, they fell upon him and killed him in the midst of his guards ; no man raising a hand to defend him, so thoroughly was he despised. He was about thirty-six at the time, and had reigned nearly thirty years.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

THE LAST OF THE EMPERORS.

DURING the twenty years which followed the death of Valentinian the Third nine men figured as emperors of the West. We know very little about them beyond their names; the reigns of all nine were very short; perhaps they may remind you of moths flitting round a dying candle, and one after another tumbling into the flame and perishing.

The first was that Maximus who had had a hand in Valentinian's death. He was a quiet, respectable old gentleman, who was very rich, and very fond of fine living and pleasant company, and was made quite miserable by the cares of government. His own beautiful wife having died of grief, he married Valentinian's widow against her will; and they say she invited the Vandals across from Africa by way of revenge. But I think they would have come without invitation quite as well.

When they came—with a great fleet, and a hungry army, Genseric leading them—all Rome shook with terror. Maximus tried to run away, but was caught by the people and stoned: his new wife was married again against her will to more husbands, Vandals this time; and Genseric let his savages loose upon the city.

Again, they say, fearless Bishop Leo interceded
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with the conquerors, and persuaded Genseric to go away with as much plunder as his army could carry, and ever so many Roman boys and girls as slaves.

When he was gone, the miserable Romans ventured to creep out of their hiding-places, and found that a Goth in Gaul had appointed one AVITUS emperor of the West. The Romans would have been glad of any emperor, no matter where he came from or who chose him, if he only secured them a quiet life. But Avitus, caring nothing for them, and letting the Vandals come back again and again in their ships to plunder the coast, while he lived idly and sottishly in Gaul, they groaned and cried, Was there no one who would rule them safely, and take care of them?

Among the wild Northmen who were then in Italy was a Suevian, whose name was RICIMER. He was a native of the country we call Prussia; a bold, brutal, ignorant savage; fond of fighting, and fond of power. He said now that he would protect Italy.

He was as good as his word. The first Vandals who landed he attacked and drove back. Then he marched away to the north to meet Avitus, who was very indignant that any one should do his work; caught him, and said, Would he give up the empire and become a bishop, or have his head cut off? Avitus said, very quickly, that he preferred the bishopric.

Ricimer wouldn't be emperor himself; he thought it greater to be an emperor-maker; so he set on the throne a brave and able soldier named MAJORIAN. Majorian reigned about four years, during which he

made several good laws, lightened the taxes, quieted Gaul, where the Goths were eternally going to war with their neighbors, and even frightened the Vandal king, Genseric, into making a treaty by which he promised not to molest Rome in future. But while he was working thus usefully for the empire, Ricimer grew jealous of him, seized him, with the help of his soldiers, forced him to abdicate, and, they say, poisoned him five days afterward.

Then the emperor-maker set up one SEVERUS, of whom we know nothing at all, except that he was wisely a mere shadow in the empire, while Ricimer fought and battled with the Vandals. Severus dying, the Emperor of the East sent over a man of his own, ANTHEMIUS, with a civil message to Ricimer, to say he would be much obliged if he would let Anthemius have the empire. The proud emperor-maker was at first inclined to say No; but falling in love (if such a savage could fall in love) with the daughter of Anthemius, he made a bargain by which the father got the empire and he the lady.

This lasted till Ricimer grew tired of his new wife—that is to say, a few months—then Ricimer found an ambitious noble, named OLYBRIUS, and asked him, Would he be sure to be very submissive and grateful if he were made emperor?

Olybrius swearing that he would be like a dutiful son to Ricimer, the emperor-maker called his fighting men together and marched to Rome. Anthemius had fighting men too, fierce Goths, who were fattening on the spoils of Rome; and a hard fight they had of it, on the Angel's Bridge and over

against the great Tomb of Hadrian, from whence the Goths threw down statues and rich bronzes on their assailants, when they had expended their ammunition. In the end Ricimer cut his way into the city, and gave it up to his men to be once more sacked. Olybrius said the Romans ought to be glad to see the triumph of their rightful emperor; but sacked by an emperor or sacked by the Vandals, it is pretty much the same thing to the city sacked.

In the rioting, and reveling, and butchering, and burning of the sack, the emperor-maker died, with a heavy account on his soul. Then Olybrius died too—the best thing he could do.

Up started a new emperor-maker, a Burgundian this time, of the same stamp as Ricimer, by name GUNDOBALD, and he made an emperor of one GLYCERUS. Glycerius only flitted round the candle for a very short while; for the Emperor of the East sent over the husband of a niece of his, JULIUS NEPOS, with a few troops, and Nepos made himself master of Rome and Glycerius too. He offered him the old choice, a bishopric or death (a strange idea, to make bishops out of cast-off emperors, but it seems to have answered pretty well, as bishops went); Glycerius chose the former, and went off to his see.

Then arose another emperor-maker—a general named ORESTES. He got the command of the soldiers in Italy, and straightway set up his son—a handsome boy—whose name was ROMULUS AUGUSTUS, but who, from his youth, was commonly called AUGUSTULUS, or LITTLE AUGUSTUS. Julius Nepos running away, Augustulus was proclaimed.

Then said the soldiers to his father, "We have been making a pretty good supply of emperors lately: we want something to pay us for our trouble. We want one-third of all the land in Italy."

Said Orestes, "You shall have nothing of the kind."

Now there was among these soldiers a huge warrior called ODOACER, who had come of some wild tribe which had been scattered and destroyed in the wars. When his people perished, Odoacer fled to Africa, and made a living as a robber. Being somewhat superstitious, as robbers sometimes are, he went to a shaggy saint, who lived in a narrow cell in the wilderness, and asked him for his blessing. The saint, who seems to have been a very strange sort of saint, blessed the robber, and prophesied that if he went to Italy he would become great and famous.

Odoacer thanked the saint, went to Italy, and grew a favorite with the soldiers by his daring and strength. So it came about that when Orestes refused to give the soldiers the land they wanted, they shouted with one voice that they would take it, and that Odoacer was the man to lead them.

Odoacer (who now began to think the African saint a very superior prophet) led them against Orestes, besieged him in the strong town of Pavia, fought his way in, and put Orestes to death. The boy Augustulus he took to Rome.

Arrived there, he asked Augustulus whether he hadn't better give up the name of emperor, and go and live quietly in a country house which Odoacer would give him? The poor boy said, Indeed he

would. And Odoacer, to his honor, gave him a house, and land, and money for his support.

Then said Odoacer to the Senate, "I think we have had emperors enough."

Said the Senate, "Oh, quite enough!"

Said Odoacer, "Just be so good as to write that down and send it to the Emperor of the East, so that he shall not send us any more of his nephews or favorites."

The Senate wrote the letter, saying that the Romans did not want any more emperors, having no use for them, now that they had got so great and good a master as Odoacer; that the Emperor of the East might take the title of Emperor of the West too, if he cared about it; and that the Senate was convinced it was not wanted any more, and quite cheerfully gave up its power to Odoacer.

So ended the Roman empire.

Odoacer was killed, in course of time, by another wild chief as savage as himself; and for sixty or seventy years a rough tribe called Ostrogoths lorded it in Italy. They were overthrown and utterly destroyed in their turn, partly by the troops of the Greek emperor, led by an exceedingly brave and skillful general named BELISARIUS; and partly by a new race of wild men called LOMBARDS, who set up a kingdom of their own in the northern part of Italy.

For about a century the Lombard kings and the governors appointed by the Greek emperors ruled Italy, and tore it asunder, and robbed, and butchered, and ravaged like very wild beasts. Then the

King of France, CHARLEMAGNE, being a great warrior, and very ambitious, thought it a fine thing to demolish these Lombards and Greeks, and make himself Emperor of the West. He was crowned at Rome just one thousand and fifty-six years ago.

His successors divided his dominions, and one branch of them governed Italy and part of Germany for three hundred years.

Rome was in a dreadful state all this time, the corruption of morals being something worse than I can imagine. At one time the city was governed by two vile women who were a trifle wickeder than their neighbors, and who, with their friends and their hired bullies, contrived to beat down every one who opposed them. The Moors crossed over and ravaged Italy, and so did the Normans ; the history of this time is nothing but a pool of dark blood.

There was growing up at Rome, however, a power which was not based on wickedness or hired ruffians—that power was the Church.

The bishops of Rome claimed to be a very superior kind of bishops ; infinitely better than the bishops of Asia, and Gaul, and Spain, and Greece, who, they said, were a second-rate sort of priests, and were only inspired from heaven on very rare occasions, whereas the bishops of Rome had a never-failing supply of inspiration, and couldn't, by any chance—however hard they might try—make a mistake in any thing. It took a long time to convince the people of Europe that this was all so ; but they believed it at last, and then, of course, the bishops of Rome—who took the name of POPE, or Father,

to distinguish them from the other bishops—became very important and powerful characters.

They found out—being inspired, of course—that the real meaning of the Bible was, that the Popes should be the masters of Rome; and this too they persuaded the Emperor and other people to believe. There were some difficulties at first; but when the Popes said that it had been revealed to them that they were to curse every one who opposed them, and that the effect of this curse would be that the person cursed would have no rest either in this world or the next, every body gave up the point, and the Popes got Rome and a slice of land with it.

They were likewise inspired to manage the affairs of Europe generally; and this they did so cleverly, that one Pope actually had his stirrup held for him, when he went out a-riding, by the kings of England and France. It was revealed to another Pope that he was to appoint and depose kings as he thought fit; but this plan did not work, as the kings were so obstinate that they did not always mind the revelation.

Another Pope found out that the intention of Providence was that America—then just discovered—should be the private property of the Popes; and he gave it accordingly to his good friend the King of Spain. But the English and French were beginning about this time to think less of the Popes; and though the latter cursed them with their strongest curses, these obstinate people went on sailing their ships over to America, and taking possession of the new country, and founding colonies on the sea-shore,

without so much as saying “By your leave” to the poor Pope. Whereby it comes that, in this day of ours, there are Protestant States overspreading this glorious continent, greater and richer in every good thing than the nation to which the Pope gave the whole.

Another Pope was inspired to set up a tribunal for the purpose of making people Christians and Catholics by torturing them. This idea was thought so good that all the other Popes followed it out, and in some countries the new tribunal, which was called the INQUISITION, had a long and a bloody reign. Hundreds and thousands of unhappy Jews, and Moors, and Protestants, and other heretics, were tortured to death in its cells, by way of proving the humanity, and the charity, and the kindliness of the Pope’s church.

The Popes had their ups and downs like other monarchs. Once they were driven out of Italy, and lived in France for many years. Once a great-hearted man named RIENZI got up a rebellion, and revived the Roman republic; but it was only a flicker, and soon died out. Sometimes there were two Popes, with rival establishments, each abusing the other, and cursing the other.

But in spite of all these disturbances and troubles the Popedom lived on, and lives still, in possession of Rome.

Here and there, among the bad Popes, there has been a good one—a devout, worthy priest, who has done his duty to God and man. Others, who have not been as pious as one might fancy a Pope ought

to be, have done much for the world, for letters, for art, for civilization. Mixed with these, there have sat on the Papal chair some of the most abominable wretches the world has ever known.

Altogether, the history of Rome from the destruction of the Roman empire to the present day is very curious and interesting; some day, perhaps, I will write it out for you.

CHAPTER LXXX.

THE END.

THE Romans counted twelve hundred and thirty years between the foundation of the city by Romulus and the extinction of the empire by Odoacer. There had long been floating among the people of Rome a sort of presentiment that the empire would only last twelve centuries: some old witch, or perhaps an augur, had found that out, they said, from Romulus having seen only twelve vultures on the day before he began to build the city. The same people who talked the most about this affair of the vultures, noticed also how strange it was that the last emperor—Romulus Augustus—should have had the same names as the founder and the first emperor of Rome.

But if there were any good Romans left, any who remembered their forefathers, I am sure they did not spend their thoughts, at this sad time, on vultures or emperors' names. There was enough in Italy to make any good man's heart bleed.

All that beautiful country was in ruin. Half the rich cities were gone, rooted up and pulled down by the Goths, or the Vandals, or the Huns. Others—and among these was Rome—were gloomy, desolate, and as much ruined as savages could ruin them. No plow cut furrows in the plains which had once



ARCH OF VOLATERRA.

shone bright with golden harvests ; the vines trailed on the ground, and wild cattle trampled the grapes : along the great Roman roads nothing was seen but tumbling houses, broken-down palaces, desert farms, with here and there a black fire-charred pile ; over all grew rank, unwholesome weeds, through which lizards crawled, and wolves prowled at night. Even the air had grown deathly from the marshes and bogs which there was no one to drain now.

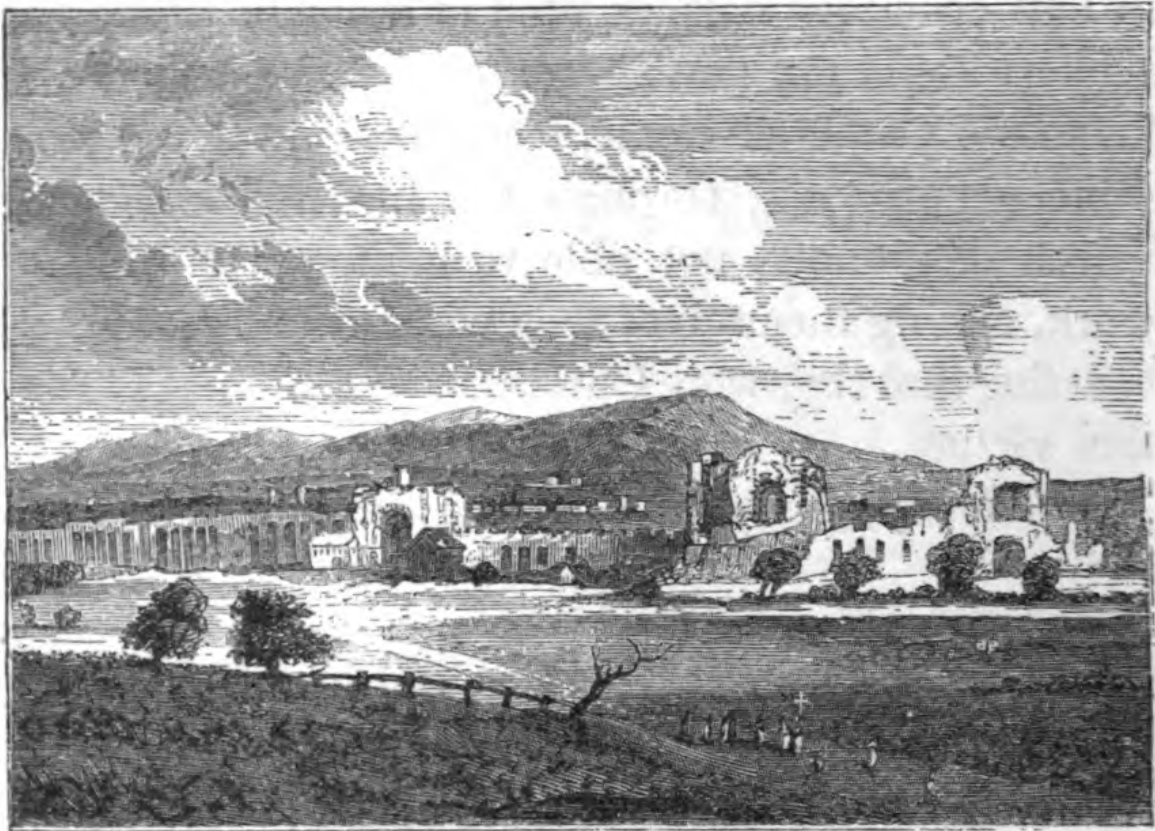
The old Roman people were gone. Some killed ; some fled abroad, calling themselves Goths, Huns, Germans, any thing to be rid of the awful taxation of the later emperors ; some slowly dropping away

in half crumbled palaces, glad of a garret where the soldiers could not find them ; others, the sons of the brave old people of Rome, lazily basking in the sunshine or prowling through the battered streets in search of plunder, not able to fight, not willing to work, calling themselves men without any manhood, boasting that they were Christians without one Christian virtue.

For many, many years before the fall of the em-



RUINS AT CAPUA.



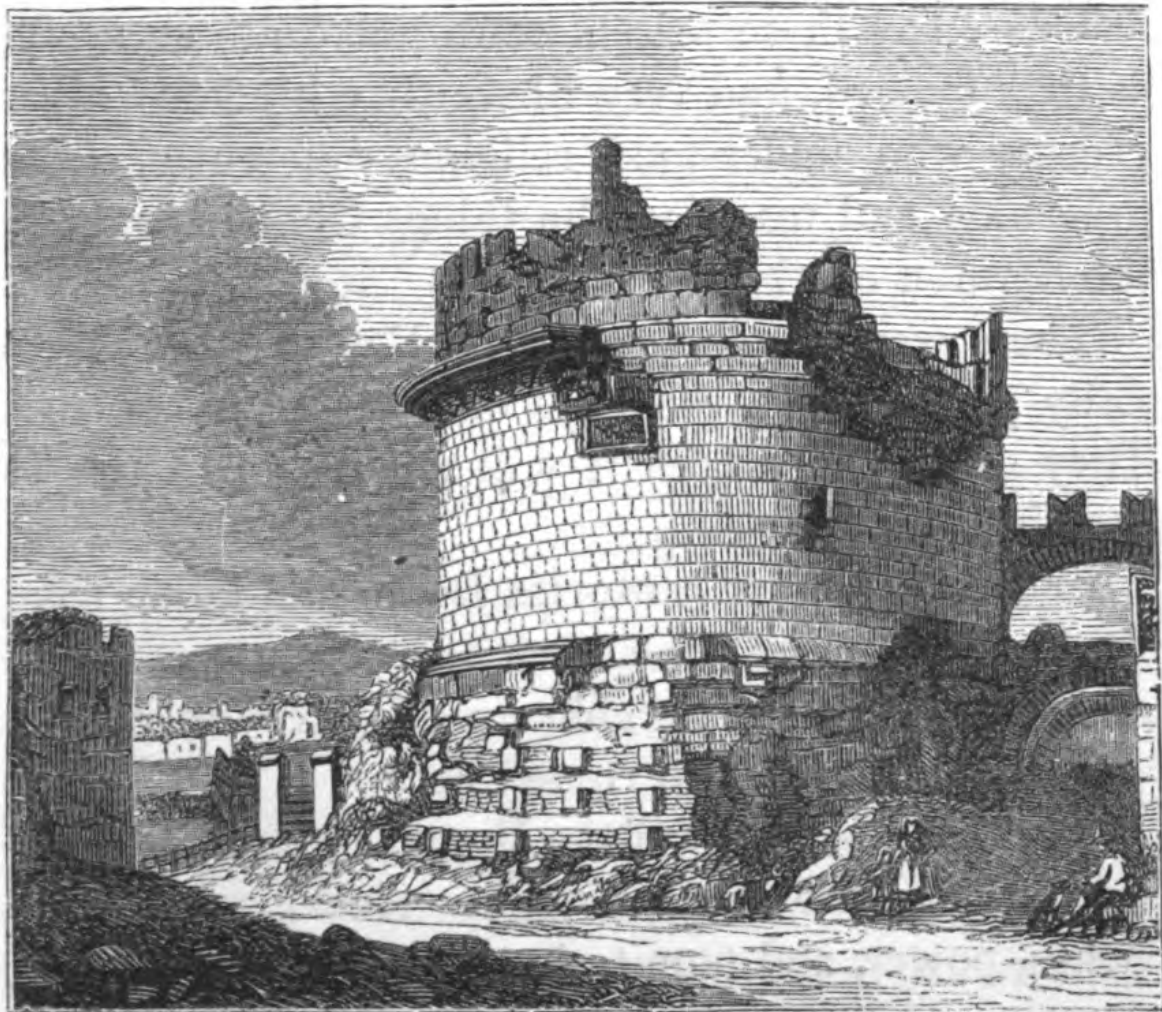
THE ALBAN HILLS.

pire the armies which had sometimes protected and always enslaved Italy had not contained a handful of Romans or even Italians. They were Goths and Huns, Suevi and Burgundians, Asiatics and Vandals; men from the shores of the Baltic and the shores of the Caspian, from the forests of Hungary and the marshes of Belgium; white men, and swarthy men, and dark Africans; men in scaly armor from the East; men clothed in the skins of bears and wolves from the North, men without armor at all from the South; a gathering of all the vagabonds from every part of the world who were willing to sell themselves for money, and to rob, kill, burn, and ravage without stint. For more than fifty years these were the only defenders of Italy.

The whole empire was Christian; but I am sorry to say, as you will be sorry to learn, that Christian-

ity seemed to have made very little difference in the hearts of the people. Their conversion, I am afraid, was not always very sincere; whole armies and whole cities were apt to say they were Christians the moment they heard the emperor, or the governor, or the general was a Christian; and as to the moral virtues which Christianity teaches, they did not think of them at all.

There were, during the two or three last centuries at Rome, many violent quarrels among the Christians about points of doctrine; and more than once, when one sect had the upper hand it would persecute the other sects in a way that was uncommonly like the plan of the old Romans. I am not sure,



TOMB OF CÆCILIA METELLA.

either, that all the priests and bishops did all the good that might have been expected of them. Many of them thought it was very religious to shut themselves up in fine houses, and live without work, by persuading people to give them money in return for prayers, and blessings, and the like: others went away to the woods, and lived in caves and hollow trees, and fasted, and tore their bodies, and saw strange visions; and a good many, who had different ideas of religion from these, made themselves very powerful, and taught the people that the clergy were the best persons to do their thinking for them, and to spend their money, and that if the people wanted to be saved, they must on no account oppose a priest in any thing.

I dare say these priests were not quite so useful as they fancied, and very likely they hindered other priests, who understood religion differently, from preaching and teaching the things Christ taught in the Sermon on the Mount.

These were the subjects good Romans must have sadly pondered in the days of Odoacer the robber. They are things which it will not do you harm to bear in mind.

In less than four centuries Rome had fallen from the highest pitch of power that any nation ever reached to the forlorn, miserable state I have described.

Four fatal evils had ruined her.

First. The division of the Romans into two hereditary classes—nobles and people—securing to the one riches, power, and temptation, to the other poverty, oppression, and ignorance.

Second. The spirit of lawlessness, of which the nobles set the example, and which the people soon acquired.

Third. The love of conquest, which obliged Rome to keep up a standing army, in whose presence liberty never has been or can be safe ;

And Fourth. The want of some abiding rule of virtue, to guard individuals against man's natural inclination to wrong.

What those fatal evils did fifteen hundred or two thousand years ago, they will do to-day.

If—which God forbid!—in any evil hour to come, you should see symptoms of their appearance here—of divisions of classes, of a growing disrespect for the laws, of a spirit of conquest, of indifference to good morals—then it will be time for you to resolve that when you grow up you will put your whole soul into the struggle against these great evils ; for you know, from the history of Rome, where such things must lead.

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